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ABSTRACT

The first part of a research effort to examine the utility of a leadership model (Moss and Liang 1990) identified leadership attributes needed by successful vocational administrators. In a follow-up to this research, state-level administrators in seven states were interviewed to nominate successful administrators. The top "ranked" administrators were interviewed, and each named six instructors. Thirty-nine administrators and 78 instructors were interviewed (in pursuance of the goal of interviewing 2 instructors working for each local administrator). Researchers used computer software called The Ethnograph to code, group, code again, and regroup information according to categories, attributes, and contexts. A coding system was established as a formal guide for interview analysis. Each interviewee described events in which an administrator was particularly effective. Administrators described an event in which, in hindsight, they would have altered their behavior. Of the 14 items generated, number 4, "implementing a self-selected change or improvement," was discussed by the highest number of interviewees. After behaviors from 272 event write-ups were coded, behavior statement texts were aggregated by individual code and analyzed to determine the extent to which they described potential leadership attribute statements. The remainder of the report discusses leadership behaviors in relation to the following seven attribute clusters: physical, intellectual, personal, ethical, human relations, management, and cognitive. (Thirty-one references are listed. Appendixes include a breakdown of the Moss and Liang Leader Attributes, interview schedules, and sample event write-up.) (YLB)

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past several years, great concern has been expressed about the preparation of educational administrators. Cunningham (1985), for example, raised a number of significant questions about what it may take to provide meaningful leadership preparation. He noted that in past years "leaders have often simply emerged; they have drifted into positions of leadership or been drafted for leadership roles" (p. 17). Concern has led to detailed examinations of and recommendations for reform in educational administrator preparation. A report released by the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (Griffiths, Stout, & Forsyth, 1988) supported major changes to the field. The changes recommended included establishing a clearer definition of what constitutes good educational leadership, developing more relevant preparation programs, improving the administrator selection process, establishing licenser systems, and forming better linkages between educational agencies and universities. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) released a report that echoed the need to provide improved school leadership preparation (Shibles, 1988). Recommendations developed by AACTE's Subcommittee on the Preparation of School Administrators focused on the improvement of university preparation programs in the areas of program content, program structure, recruitment and selection, instructional approaches, student research, professional development programs, and university faculty.

As a subset of educational administration, vocational education administration faces similar challenges in terms of preparing persons who can serve in meaningful leadership roles. Although it is recognized that professional programs focusing on vocational education administrator preparation have accomplished a great deal, future challenges facing vocational education dictate that administrator preparation processes be examined and refined, beginning with determining what constitutes successful administration and extending to the development of innovative instructional sequences that will help prepare future-oriented leaders.

RATIONALE

Conceptual Framework

Although leaders and leadership have existed for several thousand years (e.g., Roberts, 1987), the systematic search for answers to what leadership is and how leaders may be identified has been a relatively recent phenomenon. Growing from the scientific management movement of the 1900s were explorations of ways organizational needs could be met through improved management. However, by the 1920s, many people began to realize that human relations should also be a part of the management process. Experiments such as the Hawthorne studies tended to support this notion by raising questions about human engineering as an exact science. More recently, research emphasis has been placed on the behavioral aspects of leadership. This "movement has sought to build upon scientific and human relations movements by incorporating principles and ideas selected from the behavioral, social, and political sciences and economics" (Finch & McGough, 1982). One example of the extensive research conducted in this area is Boyatzis' (1982) seminal study of over two thousand managers' functions, responsibilities, and expectations. Boyatzis was able to isolate and identify nineteen competencies that were directly related to successful managerial performance. Examples of competencies identified include self-confidence, stamina and adaptability, use of oral presentations, and perceptual objectivity.

Unfortunately, thousands of leadership studies conducted over the years (e.g., Bass, 1985) and the vast array of leadership books (e.g., Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 1987) have failed to confirm what leadership entails. As Moss and Liang (1990) indicated, "it seems fair to say that, as yet, there is no consensus in the field on a specific definition of leadership, an explanatory model of leadership behaviors, or the most useful means of measuring leadership effectiveness" (p. 1). In response to this concern, a National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE) team at the University of Minnesota prepared both a definition and an explanatory model to serve as a framework for future discussion and research (Moss & Liang, 1990). Their work was based on an examination of thousands of leadership-related studies and publications produced over the past forty years. Although space limitations do not permit detailed discussions of the definition and model, a brief description of each is provided below.

Leadership may be thought of as both a process and a property. It is "the process of perceiving when change is needed and influencing the group by noncoercive means as persuasion and example in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement" (Moss & Liang, 1990, p. 5). The property of leadership is "ascribed to an individual by members of the group when they perceive the individual to possess certain qualities or characteristics" (p. 5). Thus, when viewed as a property, leadership is in the eye of the beholder and only persons who are so perceived are leaders.

The leadership model serves to enhance and clarify the leadership definition by depicting relationships between the leader's and the group's behaviors. It is noted in the model that "leaders' specific behaviors are determined by their attributes—the characteristics, knowledge, and skills—interacting with their perception of group attributes (including culture), the particular tasks at hand, and the general context" (Moss & Liang, 1990, p. 7). Since it was presumed that certain attributes will increase the likelihood that desirable leadership behaviors will occur in a variety of situations, a literature-based list of thirty-five attributes was prepared to accompany the model. Although not fully tested, the listing serves as a most meaningful compilation of potential leadership attributes (see Appendix A).

This study was part of a comprehensive NCRVE research effort to examine the utility of the aforementioned leadership model. As such, it explored the extent to which leader attributes could be identified within vocational education institution and group contexts. Essentially, the research sought to determine what leadership attributes (as demonstrated by behaviors) were reflective of successful administrators in their work roles. In doing so, it gives due consideration to the contexts within which these behaviors were demonstrated and the groups and individuals (followers and others) that interacted with these administrators.

Problem

Since much of the secondary and postsecondary leadership in the vocational education enterprise is exercised through administrative roles, selection and preparation of persons for vocational administration must be considered a significant research area. The present lack of an adequate research base and the disarray of programs designed to prepare persons for vocational education administration necessarily heightens that concern and makes it a significant problem.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

It is important to understand how field study activities take place within the total scope of the project. Presented below are the project's overall purpose and objectives as well as a summary of the various project phases.

Purpose and Objectives

This project has as its purpose the identification of leadership attributes associated with successful vocational education administration and, based on these findings, identification and recommendation of instructional approaches and sequences that will prepare vocational education administrators to function more successfully in their roles. More specifically, we are seeking to

1. Identify the leadership attributes needed by successful vocational administrators.
2. Identify and determine the probable effectiveness of existing formats and materials for delivering experiences designed to develop the attributes identified in #1 above.
3. Propose new instructional approaches and sequences for the initial preparation of vocational administrators and for upgrading the leadership attributes of practicing vocational administrators.

Phases

The project is divided into three phases. This report describes the project's first phase which has focused on identifying vocational administrator leadership attributes. Work during the second phase (1990) has centered on identifying and assessing existing administrator development formats and materials and proposing new instructional approaches and sequences for use in vocational education leadership development. A third phase focuses on development of case studies and a simulation that may be used in leader preparation programs.

DESIGN

This study may be described as a systematic field study in that rather specific questions were formulated prior to the time that information was gathered. The research had three foci: (1) identifying leadership attributes (as demonstrated by behaviors) that were reflective of successful vocational administrators in their work roles, (2) considering the contexts within which these behaviors were demonstrated most often, and (3) discovering how administrators made effective use of behaviors within certain contexts.

In this study, behaviors (which are considered as samples of attributes) have already occurred. Thus, the research was considered as *ex post facto*. Due to time and cost constraints, there was little choice but to conduct an *ex post facto* study. However, Kerlinger (1986) warns that *ex post facto* studies often have a design flaw in the respect that they sometimes allow extraneous variables to cloud the relationship between identified independent variable(s) and the dependent variable. Hall (1987) and Murphy (1988) maintain that a study of leadership is especially susceptible to this intervention because of the difficulty in separating causality created by the person (administrator) from causality created by organizational conditions. In order to account for variables that may mask potentially meaningful relationships among variables, emphasis was placed on the documentation of contexts within which successful administrators operate. The net result was a meaningful response to potential problems encountered with *ex post facto* studies of this type.

PROCEDURE

This study included in its research procedure (1) selecting the sample, (2) developing instrumentation, (3) training interviewers, (4) conducting the interviews, and (5) analyzing information gathered. Each of these areas is detailed below.

Sample

The persons involved in this study consisted of state staff members; vocational education administrators, who were regarded as most successful in their administrative roles; and instructors who worked with these administrators. States that served as a base from which to identify these professionals were selected from among those states having well-developed secondary and/or postsecondary vocational education programs. Standards used for the selection of states included (1) secondary and postsecondary vocational enrollments, (2) total student population of postsecondary institutions, (3) percent of operating income received from the state level, (4) vocational allotments for program year 1989, and (5) number of administrators in the administrator affiliate in the American Vocational Association (e.g., vocational directors as opposed to comprehensive high school principals). The standards were used during the selection of states to insure adequate vocational student enrollment, adequate numbers of vocational administrators, and representation from both resource rich and resource poor states. Seven states were selected. Two additional states were utilized to pilot test instruments and procedures.

In each selected state, the chief administrative officer responsible for secondary and/or postsecondary vocational education and his or her immediate subordinates were interviewed individually. During the interview, each state department representative was requested to nominate four to eight vocational education administrators who he or she considered to be the most successful of those currently employed in each state. Lists generated through discussion with various individual state department personnel were merged and, from the composite list, the administrators whose names appeared most often constituted the most successful administrator pool for that particular state. The process was repeated across the seven states until a sample of the most successful administrators was identified. Once the pool of potential administrators had been established, two to seven top "ranked" administrators in each state were contacted and asked to participate in the study. Because of the researchers' concern to interview those administrators who were recognized as most successful, different numbers of administrators were chosen from various states. For instance, in one state seven administrators were nominated by at least four of the eight state department of education interviewees. Because of the consistency of the nominations, the researchers felt comfortable including all seven. In another state, only two administrators were nominated by the majority of state department of education interviewees.

During the interviews with the selected administrators, each person was asked to provide the names of six instructors in his or her school. Two of these instructors were randomly selected from the six and interviewed. Thus, they also were considered as important contributors to the study.

Instrumentation

The interview technique was selected as the primary approach to collect field data because of its ability to assist in interpreting the significance of particular variables (Richardson, Dohrenwend, & Klein, 1965). It was chosen over other techniques and "objective" instruments because of its flexibility and adaptability (Kerlinger, 1986). The interview this study used can, in part, be labeled as moderately structured (Stewart & Cash, 1985). This is because the interview contained open-ended and probing questions that followed each major question. The probes were a mixture of open-ended and closed-ended questions. This funnelling technique allowed the freedom to probe into and to adapt to different interviewee answers like the nonstructured interview does, but it also provided a schedule for the interview. As with the structured interview, this technique can be replicated fairly easily, it produces data that can be analyzed and compared, and it does not require the use of a highly trained interviewer. In effect, the moderately structured interview was selected based on a decision to utilize the strengths and not the weaknesses of both the structured and nonstructured interviews (Stewart & Cash, 1985).

State-Level Interviews

A semi-structured interview format patterned after Moss (1988) was used to identify the most successful vocational education administrators. During the face-to-face interviews, state-level administrator interviewees were asked for their position titles as well as how frequently and in what manner they maintained contact with local vocational administrators. This question was crucial since it determined whether or not an interviewee was qualified to judge who the most successful administrators were. For instance, some state-level interviewees communicated on a weekly if not a daily basis with vocational administrators while other interviewees communicated with administrators much less frequently. If a tie occurred in the nomination process, more weight was given to those interviewees who had more frequent contact with the local vocational administrators. Each state-level administrator interviewee was asked to name four to eight top choices as most successful local vocational administrators. Probing questions enabled the interviewer to identify each state-level interviewee's reasons for nominating a particular administrator. For example, it might surface that a local vocational administrator was nominated because of a long-term friendship or political alliance rather than for more substantial reasons. This information might lead to a decision to either include or exclude a nomination for a particular local administrator from the final list. A state-level interview schedule is included as Appendix B.

Vocational Education Administrator Interviews

A four-part, moderately structured local vocational administrator interview schedule was developed by the researchers. Part I consisted of an open-ended question that asked why they believed they were nominated by state-level vocational administrators as a successful local vocational administrator. Part II, also an open-ended question, asked respondents to identify attributes they perceived themselves as having which probably contributed to them being nominated as most successful. Part III used the Behavioral Event Interview technique. Part IV asked for such demographic information as educational experience, industrial experience, educational attainment, and age.

Though Kerlinger (1986) described the face-to-face interview as "perhaps the most powerful and useful tool of social scientific survey research" (p. 379), it also dictated a considerably higher cost, more time, and sacrifices due to compromises made to improve the social context of the interview (Frey, 1983). Consequently, this study utilized the telephone to minimize the cost and time.

A key element of the interview schedule was the Behavioral Event Interview (BEI). The BEI was developed by David McClelland (1978) and colleagues at McBer and Company. It is based on the Critical Incident Technique that was created by Flanagan (1954). Flanagan had job incumbents write behavioral descriptions of critical incidents they experienced in their work. However, a problem with this technique was that the written incidents tended to not be detailed enough to determine what the job incumbent was thinking, feeling, and specifically doing. As a result, the BEI was developed so that a particular critical incident could be explored until behaviors, thoughts, and feelings were adequately reported (McClelland, 1978). Though BEI respondents may initially only discuss behaviors they believe are critical, additional probing can reveal all relevant

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behavior that occurred in the event. Klemp (1979) maintained that through the use of extensive probing, the interviewer can acquire behaviors that were actually performed in the event, rather than biased recollections of behaviors.

The BEI served to rectify some of the weaknesses that have been identified in studies of leadership (Boyatzis, 1982; Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weick, 1970; Murphy, 1988). The BEI was chosen not only because of its ability to generate competencies (though there seems to already be a sufficient amount; Bothwell [1983] alone identified over 1,400), but also for its ability to focus on meaningful dynamic behaviors (i.e., response attributes) demonstrated by leaders. Additionally, the BEI has had a very successful history of use in a variety of settings, including business, industry, education, and the military (see Goleman, 1981; Spencer, 1979; Huff, Lake, & Schaalman, 1982).

The BEI has certain advantages over direct observation procedures such as shadowing an administrator in a school for a number of days. First, the BEI is much more cost efficient than observing a respondent for an extended period of time. This is true when the BEI is conducted face-to-face, but even more so when the BEI is conducted over the telephone. Second, the BEI is capable of discovering attitudes and thought processes that are not readily observable (Boyatzis, 1982). As a result, even though events described by administrators were only a sample of all events that occurred in a school setting, factors contributing to administrative behaviors and decisions were more readily identifiable. It is because of this characteristic that Campbell et al. (1970) described the Critical Incident Technique (upon which the BEI is based) as one of the most effective methods for assessing managerial behavior.

The BEI technique is considered a form of qualitative research since it is based on the notion of context sensitivity. One factor that distinguishes qualitative research from most other forms of research is the belief that the particular physical, historical, material, and social environment in which people find themselves has a great bearing on their thoughts and feelings (Guba, 1981). However, admittedly naturalistic inquiry is always a matter of degree. For instance, even though the BEI technique allows the researcher to vicariously become situated in the subject's natural setting, an anthropological ethnographer would probably not consider it "pure." However, even researchers who describe themselves as subscribing more to phenomenology than logical positivism concede they cannot help but count "beans" or use such quantitative concepts as "bigger than" and "less than" (Reichardt & Cook, 1979). The researchers involved in this study acknowledge having this tendency and, as a result, felt it important to report several different types of frequencies.

For the first two events, each administrator was asked to think of a time that he/she felt particularly effective. This would be a time he/she felt something was accomplished and a time he/she felt particularly good about his/her leadership. Each administrator was then asked to describe an incident or event in which, due to the power of hindsight, his/her behavior would be altered. A copy of the Administrator Interview Schedule is provided in Appendix C.

Instructor Interviews

In addition to interviewing administrators, telephone interviews were conducted with instructors who worked with each administrator. Since school structures may vary (e.g., secondary schools, postsecondary technical schools), the instructors in this study taught in a range of vocational areas. The first section of the instructor interview schedule asked each instructor to name abilities that would be most important to look for in a person applying for an administrative position. Then, the instructor was asked to describe the abilities that his or her administrator possessed. The second section of the interview schedule asked the instructor to recall two incidents or events in which he/she believed the administrator was particularly effective, demonstrating successful leadership capabilities. Again, the instructor was asked to provide a very detailed description of the events.

Since the sample chosen for this study included persons from diverse organizations, persons in the same organization, and persons in the same organization but at different positions, the data gathering process was sensitive to organizational environments. By gathering meaningful information from instructors, we were in a much better position to account for organizational environments in relation to the various administrators involved in the study. Information was gathered using a format that paralleled the administrator interview schedule and can be found in Appendix D. There were several reasons why instructors were not asked to recall an event in which they perceived the administrator might act differently if a similar situation occurred again. First, only administrators themselves would know if they might change their behavior when a similar situation reoccurred. Second, there was concern that asking instructors to describe an event in which they perceived their administrator made a mistake might inhibit administrators' involvement in the study.

Interviewer Training

As noted earlier, the BEI process demands that interviewers be highly skilled in conducting interviews. Thus, project staff underwent extensive interviewer training. The training was initiated by conducting several pilot interviews with administrators and instructors. Then, a specialist in the BEI process conducted an interviewer training session for project staff. Training in the general principles for behavioral event interviewing included the principles for probe questions and for building rapport. The training schedule included critiques of interview tapes completed prior to the training session, role play interviews, interviewer self-assessment, specialist feedback, and consensus feedback. Following the training session, additional pilot interviews were conducted and critiqued.

Interview Process

Interviews may be classified as either state level (with state staff) or local level (with vocational education administrators and instructors). State-level interviews were conducted as soon as individual states had been selected to participate. After initial contact had been made and permission granted to conduct the study, appointments were set up so that face-to-face interviews could be made with state department personnel who were familiar with their state's local-level vocational administrators. We found it necessary to conduct these interviews face-to-face for two reasons. First, since the state-level interviews consisted of more open-ended questions, it was believed the interviewees could provide richer information when visited in person by the interviewer. Second, since we needed to "search" for those state department personnel who were in the best positions to identify the state's most successful administrators, it took a certain amount of on-site discussion to identify a best set of interviewees in each state department of education location. Interviews were conducted at each site over a one- to two-day period. One researcher traveled to each state at a time convenient for state-level personnel. Interviews began by talking with the chief administrative officer responsible for secondary or postsecondary vocational education. The discussion confirmed that certain state-level personnel were in the best position to judge which administrators are most successful. Interviews were held with these persons as well as others identified in the state offices as being in a good position to nominate administrators.

In order to keep bias from being introduced into the interview process, leadership criteria was not provided. However, interviewers emphasized to state-level personnel that they were as interested in identifying the most successful vocational administrators from resource poor schools as they were in identifying those from resource rich schools. In addition, because research on effective schools has shown that it requires a minimum of three years for a principal to have a strong impact on programs (Huff et al., 1982), state-level personnel were asked to nominate persons who had been in their administrative positions for at least three years.

Data from state-level interviews in each state was tabulated to determine which local-level administrators had been nominated the greatest number of times by state staff and, therefore, would be selected for an interview. Two to seven local vocational administrators were selected to be interviewed in each state.

Once interviews were conducted with state-level personnel in a particular state and once local vocational administrators were selected, local-level interviews were initiated. Each selected local vocational administrator was telephoned and, after being provided with a brief explanation of his or her role in the study, encouraged to participate. If an administrator accepted, a telephone interview date was established and a confirming letter mailed. The letter detailed what information was to be covered during the interview so that each administrator was provided an opportunity to consider which events he or she wanted to discuss. Each interview was designed to last from thirty to sixty minutes. A tape recording was made of each interview to ensure that the entire conversation was captured. However, this was only done with prior approval of the local vocational administrator. At the conclusion of each interview, the interviewer asked the local-level administrator for the names and telephone numbers of three male and three female instructors who had been at the institution for at least three years and who represented a range of occupational technical teaching areas. The administrator understood that at least two of these instructors would be contacted by telephone and interviewed by a project staff member.

Finally, the interviewers contacted at least two of the instructors who worked with the nominated administrators, and telephone interviews were scheduled. Again, letters were sent to each of the instructors scheduled to be interviewed to confirm the date and time of the interview and to present them with an overview of the project. The instructor interview process paralleled that of the administrator interviews.

Through interviewing state-level personnel, local-level administrators, and instructors, some triangulation was achieved. The instructors' interviews supported the contention of the state-level personnel that the selected local vocational administrators were leaders. In fact, the instructors actually shared some of the same events that their administrators had chosen to discuss.

ANALYSIS

This section describes the procedures used to analyze information collected from the interviews. It should be noted that analysis was not a separate phase of the study to be implemented following completion of interviews. We instead followed Lofland's (1971) suggestion to interview and analyze concurrently. Miles and Huberman (1984) also advocated analysis during data collection, stating that it allowed interviewers to improve their craft. They noted that such activity enabled the researcher to "cycle back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new—often better quality data" (p. 49). Through the use of this concurrent scheme, we were able to grow through experience and formulate a meaningful thematic structure for the final text from the collection of descriptions and events.

After each interview was conducted, the interviewer completed a write-up for each event. The write-up was prepared in first person and read like a story telling what actually happened. The purpose of the write-up was to organize and present the interview transcript and note-taking information in a more easily understandable sequence and format. Even though each interview was recorded and transcripts of the interview tapes were prepared, the write-up provided researchers with meaningful information that had been carefully organized to better facilitate analysis and coding. Information contained in the write-up was organized into "situation," "who was involved," "behavior," "thoughts/feelings," "outcome," and "writer comments" (Mentkowski, O'Brien, McEachern, & Fowler, 1982). A sample of an interview write-up is provided in Appendix E.

Since the interview process generated several thousand pages of interviews and notes, there was a concern about creating a data overload. To avoid this situation, we utilized a comprehensive analysis system. This system took the form of computer software titled *The Ethnograph*. The software enabled researchers to code, group, code again, and regroup information according to established and emerging categories, attributes, and contexts.

Of equal importance was the establishment of a sound coding system. The coding system was, in effect, a formal guide for interview analysis. As Boyatzis (1982) has noted, "the coding system attempts to explain how an interview should be assessed to determine the presence or absence, or degree of presence, of a particular characteristic" (p. 51). A coding system must, therefore, be clearly delineated so that various researchers agree as to how information will be coded.

Two "start lists" of codes were prepared. The first was drawn from Moss and Liang's (1990) conceptual model and attribute list. This list was selected as a base for a coding scheme since it was (1) established from an extensive literature review and (2) linked to a conceptual model for leadership in vocational education. For the most part, this list allowed for easy coding of leadership attributes. However, it did have to be modified as the coding process progressed. Items were added and deleted so that each behavior could be placed in a logical category. The decision to add new categories as needed aligned with the perceptions of Lofland and Lofland (1984) and Miles and Huberman (1984), who advocated modifying coding schemes during data collection and analysis instead of forcing data into predetermined coding schemes.

The second coding scheme was based on the types of events interviewees discussed with the interviewers. The lists evolved as interview information was collected based on the ways information appeared to flow. By using this approach, we accounted for preliminary notions of what information might exist in the interviews as well as what information emerged from the interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Great care was taken to clarify code terms so that different researchers were consistent in their coding. To ensure coding consistency, we employed a double-coding technique. This technique required two independent coders to categorize and code information from interviews. After this task was accomplished, the two researchers jointly reviewed each other's coding and rationale for placement. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggested that a ninety percent intercoder reliability was acceptable. They used the following formula to arrive at a percentage:

$$\text{reliability} = \frac{\text{number of agreements}}{\text{total number of agreements plus disagreements}}$$

After the coding schemes had been used on a trial basis and refined, intercoder reliability met or exceeded the ninety percent figure.

Another important rule followed was to write freely and frequently. Lofland (1971) warned that if researchers were overly concerned with organization, it could block their writing. To avoid writer's block he recommended (1) taking good notes during the interview (even if it is recorded), (2) spending at least an hour after every interview preparing a quick write-up, and (3) brainstorming on paper when contemplating the study. By implementing these practices, Lofland maintained that the data dictated the structure instead of allowing a predetermined structure to force the data into an unnatural text. McClelland (1978) agreed with Lofland in that he suggested spending an hour after each interview summarizing what was learned. However, McClelland also suggested allotting some time to prepare a brief characterization of the interviewee. This practice, he maintained, will assist the researcher in formulating hypotheses that could be explored at a later date. Miles and Huberman (1984) emphasized that the summary or write-up be rewritten several times so that it slowly evolved into a piece of text.

Information provided during the interviews with local vocational administrators and instructors also influenced the analysis. Lofland (1971) stated that "penetrating and useful qualitative analysis has the feature of striking a balance between abstract and general concepts on the one hand and quotations from a setting's participants on the other hand" (p. 128). By focusing on critical incidents or events in the interview, it was possible to attain this balance. Through the interviewee's description of specific events, rich descriptions of the event contexts and "quotable" remarks were generated that became a major part of the text.

The above procedures produced a useful but certainly not finished text. After the last interview had been conducted, needed changes in the arrangement of concepts and illustrations became evident. Rearrangement was, thus, not only necessary in the coding of behaviors and events, but also in the preliminary drafts of the text.

RESULTS

Results derived from this study focus on three areas. First, an overview of the interviewees' characteristics is presented. Second, information about the types of events and behaviors identified is provided. Finally, using identified behavior statements as a framework, various vocational education administrator leadership attributes are described.

Interviewees

The vocational administrators and instructors interviewed were drawn from seven states that have well-developed secondary and/or postsecondary vocational education programs. Standards for the selection of the seven states are included in the sample section of this report. As shown in Table 1, three states provided secondary interviewees and four states provided postsecondary interviewees. Since differences between secondary and postsecondary vocational education states have become quite blurred, programs in various states were categorized based on whether the majority full-time equivalent enrollment consisted of secondary or postsecondary students. From this group, we then selected states having sizeable numbers of either secondary or postsecondary vocational education schools (sometimes called area vocational technical schools, technical centers, and technical colleges). Thus, the bulk of the administrators selected to be interviewed served as line administrators, having direct responsibility for overseeing day-to-day operation of one or more vocational education institutions. Since we did not limit the range of administrator nominations made by state-level staff, several administrators who were chosen to be interviewed served as city-level administrators of vocational education and second tier administrators (e.g., vice-president, dean).

A total of thirty-nine administrators and seventy-eight instructors were interviewed. While efforts were made to interview two instructors working with each local administrator who was interviewed, the researchers did not do this in two states. In one state a researcher mistakenly interviewed one too many instructors, but we decided to include this

Table 1

Interview Participation by Category and Type of Interviewee

	Category[a]		Interviewees		
State	Secondary	Postsecondary	Administrator	Instructor	Events
1		X	6	13	44
2		X	7	14	49
3	X		7	14	49
4	X		7	14	49
5	X		6	12	42
6		X	4	8	28
7		X	2	3	11
			39	78	272

[a] Category selection was based on whether the majority full-time equivalent enrollment consisted of secondary or postsecondary students.

valuable information. In yet another state, we did not get full participation from one instructor. The distribution of secondary and postsecondary administrator and instructor interviewees was quite similar. Interviews with administrators and instructors generated a total of two hundred and seventy-two events related to administrator leadership.

Table 2 provides information about the interviewees' gender, education levels, and years of experience as administrators and instructors. These personal characteristics were found to be quite similar for secondary and postsecondary administrator groups. This also held true for both instructor groups.

Events and Behaviors

Events

A portion of the analysis centered on examination of events provided by administrators and instructors. This activity served to determine what types of events interviewees chose to describe. Through a preliminary examination of events, a tentative list of event types was prepared. Further examination of events and detailed coding of event text resulted in list revisions. The result was a fourteen-item list of event types (see Table 3). Since each interviewee was asked to describe events in which an administrator was particularly effective and each administrator was asked to describe an event which, due to the power of hindsight, his or her behavior would have been altered, directions to interviewees served to affect the types of events generated. "Implementing a self-selected change or improvement" was discussed by the highest number of interviewees.

This type of event was discussed in seventy-seven or twenty-eight percent of the cases. Other event types that were chosen for discussion by high numbers of interviewees included "Dealing With a Staff or Student Problem," "Participating in a Face-to-Face Situation," and "Linking With Business/Industry/Community." Obviously, some overlap tended to occur between categories. It was noted, however, that the two independent event coders seemed to be quite consistent in their decisions. The resultant categories serve as a beginning classification scheme for events generated in this manner.

Behaviors

Utilizing the leadership attribute list developed by Moss and Liang (1990), behaviors were coded from each of the two hundred and seventy-two event write-ups. Because of a lack of attribute clarity and the potential for misinterpretation of behaviors, a decision was made to not code the following four attributes: Time Management and Personal Organization, Stress Management, Appropriate Use of Leadership Styles, and Ideological Beliefs Appropriate to the Group.

As the coding progressed, several additional attributes emerged and were coded and included in the list. These included Sense of Pride, Reflective, Concern for Others, and Resourceful. The list of attributes together with the number and frequency of behaviors identified from the interviews per attribute is presented in Table 4.

It may be noted that, with the exception of omitted attributes, behaviors were identified that supported each attribute. In some cases, the number of behaviors identified per attribute was quite low. Caution should, therefore, be exercised in the interpretation of these results. As a general rule, when fewer behaviors are identified for an attribute, that attribute may be difficult to describe from an applied (field) base.

Some behaviors may appear in the table more often because they were easier for interviewees to describe. For example, communication behaviors (present in sixty-two percent of the events) is relatively easy to talk about and typically does not require some sort of value judgment. Others such as behaviors related to the emotionally balanced area tend to be value laden and less likely to be discussed.

Of particular note is the large number of behaviors identified as being communications-related attributes. This group of attributes (Communications, Networking, Group Process and Team Building, Information Gathering and Managing) reflects the exceptionally high degree of involvement successful administrators have in communications-related areas.

Attribute Descriptions

After behaviors for each of the two hundred and seventy-two event write-ups had been coded, behavior statement texts were aggregated by individual code and analyzed to

Table 2

Personal Characteristics of Interviewees

	Secondary		Postsecondary	
	Administrator	Instructor	Administrator	Instructor
Gender				
Male	18	17	15	20
Female	2	23	4	28
Highest Education				
Other	0	10	0	12
B.S.	1	10	1	5
M.S.	7	15	5	12
M.S.+	4	3	3	8
Doctorate	8	2	10	0
Mean Years Experience as Administrator or Instructor	19.05	13.86	18.05	14.71

Table 3

Types of Events Discussed by Interviewees

Event Type	Secondary		Postsecondary	
	Administrator	Instructor	Administrator	Instructor
1. Handling a crisis	0	3	1	4
2. Dealing with a staff or student problem	11	10	12	4
3. Implementing a mandated change or improvement	1	1	4	9
4. Implementing a self-selected change or improvement	21	23	16	17
5. Participating in a face-to-face situation	2	10	2	10
6. Linking with business/industry/community	4	9	3	8
7. Securing or improving facilities and/or equipment	4	9	3	8
8. Negotiating with faculty or staff representatives	1	1	1	1
9. Participating in an institution accreditation or evaluation	0	1	0	4
10. Maintaining/improving fiscal posture	2	3	2	2
11. Determining institutional mission/goals/ objectives/policies	4	5	2	3
12. Collaborating with governing boards/state agencies/political representatives/ organizations	3	5	3	2
13. Enhancing institutional visibility/image	2	2	4	6
14. Not elsewhere classified	5	3	2	3

Table 4

Number and Frequency of Behaviors Identified Per Attribute

	Secondary		Postsecondary			
Attribute	Admin.	Inst.	Admin.	Inst.	Total	Freq.[c]
I. CHARACTERISTICS						
A. Physical						
1. Energetic with stamina	0	3	4	7	14	.05
B. Intellectual						
2. Intelligent with practical judgement	0	2	2	1	5	.02
3. Insightful	7	9	15	6	37	.14
4. Adaptable, open, flexible	4	9	4	14	32	.12
5. Creative, original, visionary	16	21	12	11	60	.22
6. Tolerant of ambiguity & complexity	2	3	1	0	6	.02
C. Personal						
7. Achievement-oriented	0	1	1	2	4	.01
8. Willing to accept responsibility	11	0	9	1	21	.08
9. Assertive, initiating	19	20	17	20	76	.28
10. Confident, accepting of self	11	5	8	9	33	.12
11. Courageous, resolute, persistent	6	12	7	8	33	.12
12. Enthusiastic, optimistic	7	4	6	15	32	.12
13. Tolerant of stress & frustration	14	8	8	13	43	.16
14. Trustworthy, dependable, reliable	0	2	0	1	3	.01
15. Venturesome, risk taker	3	3	4	4	13	.05

		Secondary		Postsecondary			
	Attribute	Admin.	Inst.	Admin.	Inst.	Total	Freq.[c]
16.	Emotionally balanced	0	2	0	1	3	.01
[a]17.	Sense of pride	3	2	4	4	13	.05
[a]18.	Reflective	18	0	11	1	30	.11
D.	Ethical						
19.	Commitment to the common good	11	14	11	13	49	.18
20.	Personal integrity	2	2	2	3	9	.03
21.	Moral standards consistent with the values of society & profession	1	2	1	1	5	.02
II.	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS						
A.	Human Relations						
22.	Communication	37	50	36	45	168	.62
23.	Tact, sensitivity, respect	5	22	10	22	59	.22
24.	Motivating others	5	8	10	13	36	.13
25.	Networking	6	13	8	8	35	.13
[a]26.	Concern	0	17	1	12	30	.11
B.	Management						
27.	Planning	17	10	17	8	52	.19
28.	Organizing	12	23	22	13	70	.26
29.	Group process & team building	20	22	24	31	97	.36
30.	Coaching	1	5	4	4	14	.05
31.	Conflict management	3	6	7	5	21	.08
[b]32.	Time management & personal organization	0	0	0	0	0	0
[b]33.	Stress management	0	0	0	0	0	0

Attribute	Secondary Admin.	Secondary Inst.	Postsecondary Admin.	Postsecondary Inst.	Total	Freq.[c]
[b]34. Appropriate use of leadership styles	0	0	0	0	0	0
[b]35. Ideological beliefs appropriate to the group	0	0	0	0	0	0
[a]36. Resourceful	0	8	3	2	13	.05
C. Cognitive						
37. Decision-making	18	15	23	16	72	.26
38. Problem-solving	8	4	5	6	23	.08
39. Information gathering & managing	23	28	20	20	91	.33

Note: Leadership behaviors were counted on the basis of one per event even though they may have been identified more than once in that event.

[a] Added to Moss and Liang (1990) list based on research findings

[b] Not coded

[c] Percent of behavior occurrence in total of 272 events

determine the extent to which they described each of the potential leadership attribute statements. In all but a few cases, a sufficient number of behaviors was available so that attributes could be described. It was often found that behaviors occurred in a variety of contexts and involved a number of individuals. We also noted that administrator behaviors were included in texts generated by instructors as well as administrators. It became clear that the inclusion of instructors in the interview process provided enriched descriptions of vocational education administrators' roles and responsibilities.

What follows is a discussion of various leadership behaviors in relation to seven attribute areas: Physical, Intellectual, Personal, Ethical, Human Relations, Management, and Cognitive. Examples of behaviors used to describe the different attributes were drawn from a file of over fourteen hundred separate behavior entries identified during the analysis process. As noted earlier, several leadership attributes from the Moss and Liang (1990) list were purposely excluded from our analysis. Time Management and Personal Organization, Stress Management, Appropriate Use Of Leadership Styles, and Ideological Beliefs Appropriate To The Group were not sufficiently refined to code at this time. For example, the term "appropriate" may mean many things to many people. Future plans call for development of detailed codes for selected attributes and conduct of several narrowly focused analyses. Finally, in the case of several attributes, only a small number of behaviors were identified. For those attributes with fewer recorded behaviors, support for attribute validity is less stable. Thus, caution should be taken when interpreting the descriptions of the following attributes: Intelligent With Practical Judgment; Tolerant of Ambiguity and Complexity; Achievement-Oriented; Trustworthy, Dependable, Reliable; Emotionally Balanced; Personal Integrity; and Moral Standards.

Physical Cluster

The physical "cluster" consisted of one attribute, *Energetic With Stamina*. Behaviors supporting this attribute were largely identified in events generated by instructors. The successful administrator applies energies in a variety of ways. For example, when one instructor recounted a time when he took a course from an administrator, he stated,

> "The other instructors in the class used the word dynamic to describe this administrator. She is peppy and keeps things moving."

Another instructor recalled when the current administrator replaced another administrator who had implemented little change:

> "In contrast, this administrator came in full of energy and wanted to change a lot of things."

The whirlwind nature of one administrator was described by an instructor in this way:

> "Those changes are now done and she is off doing something else. She moves from one thing to something else so fast that it is hard to say what she is thinking. I like the fact that she is so enthusiastic, but she is about to work me to death."

An administrator's comment about personal energy reflects where this energy is generated:

> "I am compulsive, driven, and crazy. I have a high energy level, and I have always been able to do the load I have taken on."

Intellectual Cluster

This leadership cluster consists of five attributes: Intelligent With Practical Judgment; Insightful; Adaptable, Open, Flexible; Creative, Original, Visionary; and Tolerant of Ambiguity and Complexity.

- **Intelligent With Practical Judgment**

  The successful administrator applies intelligence to practical settings and situations. Although behaviors related to this attribute were few and far between, several instructors seemed to express the practical side of administrator intelligence. One commented as follows:

  > "This administrator and I chatted after the workshop session. I told her that I was impressed by her taking command and her quick thinking and her ability to handle the situation thinking on her feet which she clearly demonstrated. I was very complimentary."

A second instructor remarked about the way an administrator operated:

> "He is a very knowledgeable man. He retains everything. Anything that he knows that he can go after in state or federal funds, he does. He really does not slip up on anything."

- **Insightful**

The successful administrator is quick to grasp relations among events. This person often utilizes insight gained to assist in making key decisions. An administrator recalled when he was first hired by saying,

> "I was coming into a situation that I was not totally familiar with, which was the all day, full-time senior program. At that time, it did not take me very long to realize that there was an unwritten agenda which I did not understand and which was not pointed out to me when I took the position. With the vocational schools in the county, I felt almost 100% sure that the unwritten agenda was the implementation of the full-time senior program to reduce the vocational system in the county."

Subsequently, the administrator used insight to formulate plans for modifying and strengthening vocational education in the county.

A postsecondary administrator used insight as a basis for dealing with state staff during a touchy program development situation:

> "I realized, and my staff did later, that had we gone in to tell them off and tell them how rotten they had been to us, we probably would have had great tension built up between us for future program development."

- **Adaptable, Open, Flexible**

The successful administrator is open to suggestion, criticism, and change. This individual is very open when dealing with others. One way of initiating openness is by having an open-door policy. Several administrators commented about the open-door approach:

> "Since that time, I have always had an open-door policy. The only time the door is closed is when something personal is going on. Individuals know they can come in any time they want to."

> "I emphasized to the faculty that I have an open-door policy and that if anyone had questions about anything to come and ask me and they would get correct information."

> "If the students have a problem with the school, they will come to the door and say 'Can I see you?' I have never refused a student."

Administrator openness is also perceived by instructors. As several instructors commented,

> "He always made time for me when I dropped by to discuss the status of legislation."

> "The director has an open-door policy, and I frequently dropped in and asked his opinion about some idea I had."

The flexibility aspect of this attribute is shown in the ways administrators are accepting of instructors' comments and requests. In this case, an instructor is discussing a time when the administrator was asked to meet with a class of students:

> "I wrote the administrator a note and invited him to attend the class and answer the students' questions. He accepted the invitation right away. I felt he would come because of his friendliness and because I have approached him before about things. I think he is open-minded about things. I felt that if he was free during that time, he would come and answer the questions."

Being adaptable, open, and flexible can serve as a sound base for various management functions. When discussing how an economic development plan was prepared that ended up being one of the institution's success stories, an administrator described his own openness:

> "When I was interviewing various agencies and business leaders, I discovered that there was a great need for the institution to become more actively involved with them. I was surprised as to the business leaders' comments. I had always thought the institution was attuned to what the needs were in business and industry. Our graduate placement rates were always high. But these leaders were talking about retraining and meeting their needs more directly."

- **Creative, Original, Visionary**

The successful administrator demonstrates creativity and vision. This person maintains a futuristic outlook and proactive stance. Sometimes, creativity seemed to be generated through adversity. As one administrator put it,

> "The state's economy made me think that our school needed to be proactive rather than reactive. Since the job market had tightened, I thought that our school should increase its emphasis on the jobs of tomorrow instead of jobs that presently existed. Thus, my goal was to train students for jobs that did not yet exist. I knew this would be a tremendous challenge and that our school would need help to accomplish it. I believed that the companies that were oriented toward the future would welcome our goal."

In another case, creativity emerged through a need for curriculum improvement. A secondary level administrator stated,

> "I thought that some high quality math and science programs would be successful at our vocational center. My plans were not to make the programs mandatory, but, rather, to make the programs so good that students would want to enroll in them."

This attribute was evident in a number of instructors' comments. Statements made by various instructors included the following:

> "He is not concerned that a vocational center has never offered this type of service before. In fact, he enjoys it when our school is the first to do something."

> "The administrator was able to find the funding necessary to pay for these projects without floating a bond issue."
>
> "The administrator came to the conclusion that this area needed to diversify instead of just waiting for the industry to get strong again. He believes that small businesses will eventually become the largest employer in this area. The administrator felt that because of the shape of our economy and the national trend, persons should be forced to consider more entrepreneurial endeavors. Consequently, the administrator thought that our center needed to offer services which would help increase the likelihood that these entrepreneurs would succeed."
>
> "The administrator then volunteered our school to serve as the pilot school."

- **Tolerant of Ambiguity and Complexity**

The successful administrator copes well with vague and difficult situations and settings. The small number of behaviors associated with this attribute make it more difficult to describe. Since it is often assumed that ambiguity and complexity go along with the administrator's job, people may have chosen not to comment on the area very often. General remarks made by administrators and instructors include the following:

> "This is a people business. I spend better than 55% of my time with personnel. They can really give you headaches—especially when you have union contracts, etc. But if I didn't like it, I wouldn't be in it."
>
> "When I was analyzing the budget I could not believe that a school could be in such bad shape. In fact, I wondered how the school's doors stayed open when it had been in the red for so many years."
>
> "I think this administrator was very skillful and really has been effective in putting this building project together because there was a lot of red tape."

Personal Cluster

The personal cluster consists of twelve attributes: Achievement-Oriented; Willing to Accept Responsibility; Assertive, Initiating, Persuading; Confident, Accepting of Self; Courageous, Resolute, Persistent; Enthusiastic, Optimistic; Tolerant of Stress and Frustration; Trustworthy, Dependable, Reliable; Venturesome, Risk Taker; Emotionally Balanced; Sense of Pride; and Reflective. The last two attributes were added to this cluster based on analysis.

- **Achievement-Oriented**

  The successful administrator thrives on achievement. In the interviews, administrators frequently used retention rates, placement rates, and enrollment rates to assess their performance and the performance of others. Although administrators stated that they felt good about an improvement in such rates, it became obvious that successful administrators were not complacent. Both administrator and instructor interviews provided evidence that leaders avoid complacency. Successful vocational administrators seem to believe that work for a particular goal is never over. They exhibit the attitude that there is still more that needs to be accomplished. In the following example, an administrator has implemented several measures at a postsecondary institution that significantly increased the school's retention rate:

> "I believed that although the school had taken measures to improve the retention rate, it still had a long way to go."

One instructor stated,

> "This administrator is so active that it is hard to keep up with what he is doing. I think we are moving forward. I don't think this administrator will ever stop. I think his long-range planning is forever."

> "I am sure that without this administrator's capabilities, this project would still be in a state of limbo. I think this administrator and I had a lot to do with getting the ball rolling on this project. He is very interested in seeing that the building gets built."

- **Willing to Accept Responsibility**

The successful administrator accepts responsibility for his or her actions. The third behavioral event in the administrator interview, which asked each administrator to describe an event or incident that he/she would handle differently if it was to be done over again, provided a wealth of information about the acceptance of responsibility. These events provided evidence that successful administrators reflect upon their actions. In the interviews, it was not uncommon for administrators to comment that it was easy for them to recall an event in which they had made a mistake. In fact, several of these people joked that they could remember too many of these events. However, this joking behavior seemed to demonstrate more confidence than modesty. Successful administrators seem to know they are good. Because of this self-confidence, they do not hesitate to admit their mistakes. As one administrator commented,

> "I admitted I was wrong. I told them I would restructure the staff development session and that it would be during office hours. That's how I came out of it. I think sometimes you have to admit you are wrong."

This willingness to admit mistakes and to accept the responsibility for them occurred even when it would have been easy for the administrators to place the blame on others. For example, one administrator, who had been involved in enlarging his school's facilities, said matter of factly,

> "That, as it turned out, was an error on my part. The local solicitor did not have the expertise in financing of school construction that he needed to perform the job. I made some assumptions that this person had some abilities that he did not have and that certain things were being done in a timely manner."

The need to admit one's mistakes was a common theme. Many administrators related incidents similar to the following example:

> "People appreciated the fact that I admitted I had made some mistakes and asked for their help in improving the process. I met with my administrative council and told them I had made mistakes.

> I went over the perceptions with the group, and the council agreed that employees did believe these perceptions."

Successful vocational administrators seemed to be objective about their past actions. They readily identified those behaviors that made a positive contribution to the accomplishment of their goals and those behaviors that were detrimental to their goals. As one administrator put it,

> "There was nothing wrong with my initial plan. I had just done a poor job of communicating with the instructors and with the other administrators. As a result of this poor communication, I started a fire and had to put it out."

Administrators also suggested that some of these past incidents were very complex and that there were no simple right or wrong behaviors for them. The administrators implied that there were many gray areas. Several administrators talked about tough decisions they had made and stood by, but that they still questioned. For example, one administrator was disturbed by what was best for the school and what was the humane thing to do. This administrator said,

> "I probably should not have renewed this woman's contract, even though she did have cancer. But I felt like I had to."

Similarly, another administrator stated,

> "I should have let the board fire him. I guess I felt sympathy for him because his wife just had a baby. Also, I guess I thought that this action might make him start working harder."

Not only were successful administrators willing to accept the responsibility when they had made a mistake, but they also accepted the responsibility for incidents which did not directly involve them—regardless of the repercussions. One instructor shared this about his administrator:

> "The administrator believed it was necessary to follow the registration policy and to not make an exception for this woman.

> The administrator believed he should take this position regardless of the trouble this woman would create for him. This administrator felt like he had to act in the manner he did or he would be passing the buck."

Successful vocational administrators espoused the belief that it was their job to make the tough decisions and to accept the responsibility for making them. The administrators were not always happy with the decisions. As one administrator put it,

> "The instructor decided he would not retire and that forced me into the position of placing this instructor on involuntary leave. I did not like having to place this instructor on involuntary leave, but I felt like I had no other choice considering the circumstances."

- **Assertive, Initiating, Persuading**

The successful vocational administrator does not wait for opportunities, he or she tries to create them. This became quite evident through the examples given in the behavioral events and the many times behaviors related to this attribute surfaced in the events. Administrators and instructors consistently either stated or implied that vocational education is in too precarious and competitive a position to simply sit back and wait.

Assertiveness surfaced when administrators interacted with staff members, legislators, state-level personnel, and community leaders. The following example of administrative assertiveness occurred when a group of teachers, who had been employed at the school for several years, interfered with a meeting. An instructor who was at this meeting said,

> "I think they (a group of teachers who had been at the school for a long period of time) felt that they would do what they wanted to do, but this administrator interrupted the meeting to speak to the teachers in such a manner as to let them know that this was her directive and she was going to do her job. She emphasized that they had a job, and that they were going to do their jobs, too."

The instructor interviews provided evidence that instructors are impressed with administrators who encounter problems with staff members and then deal with them. One instructor shared the following analogy that her administrator used in a speech:

> "At the beginning of the administrator's second year, she called a meeting of all staff and support staff members. In this meeting the administrator said that she had watched and listened for about a year. She then said the school staff were in a boat. She said that some staff members had their oars in the mud. The administrator explained that those persons who had their oars in the mud were resistant to change and complained about anything. She said that some staff members were in the boat, but were not paddling forward. The administrator stated that this boat (school) was going forward and that those persons in the boat had better start paddling or find another boat."

Comments provided by another instructor suggested that some administrators are even more direct:

> "The administrator told the staff she was sympathetic to some of our problems, but that there were some people who would complain regardless of the situation. The administrator said that she wanted us to produce and to be positive. She recommended that if anyone did not want to produce and be positive, he or she had better look for another place to be employed."

Administrators were not only assertive with their subordinates, but with their superiors as well. These people initiated contact with legislators, governors, community leaders, and industrial leaders. The following demonstrates that successful administrators tend to be masters of the art of persuasion:

> "I arranged for five other administrators and I (who serve on an informal committee) to meet with the governor. A couple of committee members and I persuaded the governor to change his position on two or three relatively minor issues. A short time after

> this meeting, the five administrators and I met with the secretary of commerce."

The administrators frequently used the terms "sold" and "convinced":

> "I recommended to the committee that we conduct a climate survey. I successfully sold this idea to the committee and to the administrative staff."
>
> "From talking both formally and informally with board members, I was able to sell them on the idea."
>
> "I went to the state board of regents and sold them on the idea that this is what we needed to do. I convinced them that we needed to come up with this amount of money."

Another situation demonstrates how successful administrators are able to be assertive, initiating, and persuading:

> "I approached the state director of vocational education and shared with him my idea. After our meeting, he told me that he supported the concept. I then met with the new state superintendent and persuaded him that I had a good idea. I then talked with the sixteen local superintendents who contribute to this area center and shared with them my aspirations to establish high quality math and science programs at the area center."

- **Confident, Accepting of Self**

The successful vocational administrator is very confident and accepting of self. Successful administrators are so confident of themselves that they frequently encourage input from staff members on decisions. They accept differences of opinion. One example of this attribute in action is as follows:

> "I felt fine about the one group saying I should be doing things. I think that is absolutely necessary, and I think it is healthy because

> you do not want to have folks continually grumbling. If you have one or two unhappy people, it is better to have it aired."

Another administrator, in effect, stated this philosophy directly to his staff:

> "I told the others to let him speak and say what he has to say. Remember, we said no holds barred."

Some administrators are so confident of themselves that they go to great lengths to increase instructor participation in administrative decisions:

> "I was quite familiar with the climate survey because I had used it at the previous school at which I worked and our state department also had used it. Consequently, I thought it would be a useful tool to use at this school. My goal was to increase teacher participation in administrative decisions and to improve the school's climate."

Instructors seemed to appreciate it when their administrators exhibited confidence. These people suggested that the more secure and confident administrators were, the more open the administrators were to input. One instructor said this about her administrator:

> "He encourages openness. To me, that means he has some confidence in what he is doing. He is not afraid to listen to other opinions."

Instructors also implied that their administrators' confidence was contagious:

> "Initially, the faculty were very apprehensive. However, the administrator had a calming effect on the staff. He was confident that the school would benefit from becoming a state school."

Another instructor suggested that administrator performance and confidence helped set the tone for the faculty:

> "The administrator said that if we did this, he felt sure that things would turn out well for us. And sure enough it did."

It is evident from the many examples the interviews collected that successful vocational administrators seek input. However, it also appears that once these leaders have made decisions, they expect them to be followed. For example, instructors often made such statements as follows:

> "This administrator did make it clear that he believed strongly in the project and that it would be implemented in some manner."

Administrators recognize that major changes take time to implement successfully. However, because they are confident in their abilities, administrators are convinced they need only time to implement the changes. These leaders often credited part of their confidence to their professional faculty. Several administrators expressed confidence in their instructors:

> "I was confident that when the instructors became convinced that individualized instruction could increase student learning, they would work hard at implementing it."

Instructors were very cognizant of their administrators' confidence in them:

> "I felt good from the onset because the administrator was confident that I would be successful in teaching such a course."

> "I think the administrator has great respect for most of the faculty members, and he was confident that the committee would make changes that were appropriate for the situation."

Another reason these administrators seemed to have such confidence was that they employed certain behaviors. For example, these administrators would gather information, communicate, and network to accomplish a goal. They knew that "doing their homework" increased the likelihood of success. The following example illustrates why many administrators were not surprised when they did experience success:

> "I thought that these proposals would be funded. I believed that I had gained the support of our legislators, and I felt like they would do what was in their power to help get the proposals funded. Thus, I was not surprised to be informed that I would receive the funds that I requested."

- **Courageous, Resolute, Persistent**

The successful administrator is resolute, courageous, and persistent, particularly in the face of adversity. Because of the nature of their positions, vocational administrators frequently encounter major challenges. It is often the administrators' performance in these challenging events which distinguishes them as leaders. Though it was evident from the events that successful administrators enjoy their jobs, it was also seen that these leaders were willing to take actions that might jeopardize their employment. In the following example, an administrator who had been at this particular school for only two years had decided to dismiss a powerful yet uncooperative faculty member:

> "About three weeks after I had told the faculty member of my plans not to renew her contract, I got a phone call from a legislative research organization. They asked me if I really planned to dismiss the legislator's wife. I informed them, as I did all the others that called, that yes she was being dismissed."

Instructors frequently provided examples of their successful administrators having the courage to oppose persons more powerful than them:

> "I was a dedicated worker. The administrator asked the president of the institution why he wanted me dismissed. The president told him that it was a personal matter. My administrator then said to the president that there was no way that he would fire me. He said that he would go before I would."

Instructors recognized the tough position in which administrators are frequently placed. Consequently, they are even more impressed with administrators who do what they perceive is right, instead of what is politically expedient:

> "I think it was very brave of him. It would have been much easier for him to have muddled along. Nobody would have blamed him for that."

> "I think her taking that stand really got the faculty behind her. The instructors now believe that this administrator will not be anyone's puppet."

Successful vocational administrators not only show courage in short-term events, but they also exhibit resoluteness and persistence over the long term. This is one of many examples the instructors shared about how their administrators persevered:

> "The director had to revise and resubmit the proposal several times before the state department finally accepted it."

Administrators were rather matter of fact about their tenacity. They recognized and accepted implementing change as a long and arduous process:

> "I then discussed with the superintendent particular vocational programs that could be satellite programs located at his school. In total, I met with the superintendent by myself and with others (state director of secondary education, school board, principal) about eight times. Each of these meetings lasted two to three hours."

However, there were times when administrators also said enough is enough. This secondary administrator had to present a salary schedule to the school board four times before it was accepted:

> "I then told the board that my assistant and I had revised the schedule three times to incorporate their recommendations, and that it was time they accepted it."

This is not to suggest that these leaders were not resolute. On the contrary, they were very resolute. One instructor said this about her administrator:

> "The administrator is frequently communicating with legislators. The administrator is not always successful in convincing the legislators that they should support vocational education, but he always tries. He never misses an opportunity to sell vocational education."

In one case, an administrator made an unpopular decision. In this instance, however, the administrator was persistent. Fortunately, it turned out to be the correct decision:

> "I caught a lot of heat for doing this. I listened to criticisms from division chairpersons and part-time faculty members who said that I removed the incentives from part-time faculty members. However, I stood by my convictions."

- **Enthusiastic, Optimistic**

The successful administrator is enthusiastic and optimistic. These people face challenges with a positive outlook as the following examples illustrated:

> "I was excited that the first superintendent, who was hired by the district, gave me this challenge."

> "I was quite excited about the chance for our school to do this work. I believed that if we were successful, the school would do more work in the future for this company and that it could open up other possibilities."

In fact, one vocational administrator admitted that his concept of what constituted a problem was sometimes different from others. This administrator had an optimistic view of what others felt was a problem:

> "Some people view this as a problem. I do not view this as a problem. Perhaps some people do not come to the Vo-Tech school because it is too difficult. I think that is a rarity. I view it as being positive."

While behaviors related to this attribute were coded several times from administrator interviews, they were coded extensively from instructor interviews. Instructors made it clear that their administrators set the tone at the school. Successful vocational administrators were able to generate enthusiasm among their faculty as was evident from this statement:

> "I think he came to the meeting with enthusiasm, and he wanted it to become contagious. I thought everyone was very positive and upbeat. Some examples of his enthusiasm are his smiles and his personality. He beams like a star. When he comes on the scene, he brightens it up because he is so positive, outgoing, and supportive."

A comment from an instructor demonstrates how administrators are positive when implementing a controversial change:

> "The administrator emphasized the positive. For instance, she stressed that the schedule changes and the curriculum changes would benefit the students and the teachers. The administrator pointed out that an instructor might have to teach Thursday evenings, but might get to go home Friday at noon."

Because administrators are optimistic, they are able to minimize instructors' anxieties:

> "In all the meetings the administrator called when our local school was in the process of becoming a state institution, he would always emphasize the good things that were going to occur from the change. Sure the staff still had some anxieties, but the administrator minimized them."

> "The administrator was very positive and optimistic. The tone that the administrator set had an effect on the entire faculty. In general, the faculty was positive and confident that the school would be accredited."

Successful administrators are cognizant of the benefits of maintaining a positive tone, and they are adept at keeping the tone positive:

> "A couple of times some of the comments degenerated into negative comments. However, at these points the administrator changed or redirected the focus of the questions so that the tone of the session would remain upbeat. The administrator was sincerely interested in hearing from everyone. However, he really did not want these sessions to become gripe sessions. He felt for the sessions to be productive, the groups needed to be constructive."

Administrators are enthusiastic both outside and inside the school:

> "When this administrator talks to civic groups, she has a smile on her face. When former students visit the school, she smiles and says, 'how are you?' She comes into classrooms and personally gives attendance awards to students rather than dropping them in the mail box. She knows students' names, and she stops to talk to them."

- **Tolerant of Stress and Frustration**

The successful administrator copes well with stressful and frustrating situations. Sometimes administrators might have made a decision that would have minimized or even eliminated stress and frustration, but they elected not to make the easy decision because they believed it was not in the best interests of the school. The following example provided by an instructor exemplified this situation:

> "I think this was a very tough decision for this administrator, but I think he feels good about it. It would have been much easier to go a different route because it would have satisfied a lot of people. But this administrator had a responsibility to the school as well as to the staff that he manages."

In some instances, it seems that vocational administrators are willing to risk losing their jobs to make a "right" but politically unpopular decision. Successful administrators believe stress and frustration are a small price to pay for personal integrity. In the following example, an instructor alluded to the stress and frustration her administrator must have experienced when deciding not to renew a faculty member's contract. This faculty member had been employed at the school for a number of years, but, according to two instructors and one administrator, had not been productive for a very long time. The administrator had only been at this particular school for two years when she decided not to renew the faculty member's contract. The following was the result:

> "Following this decision, the administrator caught a lot of heat. The person had strong political ties. The administrator got phone calls from the state department, legislators—you name it. Someone even put cat food in the administrator's mail box. But the administrator stood firm. She ran the school as if nothing was happening. In fact, she never seemed to let this incident affect her."

As suggested above and in the following example, successful vocational administrators don't seem to let stress and frustration hinder their performance:

> "Much of the feedback was negative. Some people complained because they thought that they could not handle this curriculum due to the differences in the settings. The administrator impressed me because she handled the hostile, negative environment while remaining calm, sticking to the objectives, and handling the meeting. She was not ruffled by this."

However, this is not to imply that successful vocational administrators are impervious to stress and frustration. They are not. Successful administrators are just tolerant of it. They also recognize that it is usually not politically expedient to exhibit stress and frustration. In the following statement, an administrator had met with a student group on a number of occasions to discuss their concerns. In fact, the administrator had put forth a great deal of effort to address this group's concerns. Nevertheless, this group of students entered a large meeting filled with guests of the school and demanded to be heard. An instructor commented:

> "I think this administrator felt rather bad about the disruption because I know he had talked with them about the situation

> previously. I know he thought they should not have disrupted the meeting as they did. I could see on his face that he was distraught, but he had everything under control. After the meeting was over, this administrator showed that he was upset. He voiced his opinion to us, but not to the entire group."

Although administrators are tolerant of stress and frustration, they do attempt to minimize it when possible. One instructor suspected that her administrator made a special effort to make as palatable as possible a request for more paperwork from the instructors:

> "However, I do think the administrator was apprehensive about presenting the proposal to the instructors because he knew it would increase our paperwork. It might have been because of this apprehension that the president put a lot of effort into selling his idea to the instructors."

- **Trustworthy, Dependable, Reliable**

The successful administrator maintains the trust of others and can be relied on to complete what is initiated. Trustworthiness, dependability, and reliability did not surface many times in the behavioral events. However, this attribute was often mentioned in the more direct questions preceding the BEI (behavioral event interview) section on the interview schedule. Comments suggested that instructors and administrators both consider a leader to be trustworthy, dependable, and reliable. Thus, the few times this attribute was reported does not diminish its importance. On the contrary, in the behavior examples identified, it became clear that this attribute was most important for administrators to possess. In fact, instructors implied that trustworthiness, dependability, and reliability seem to be frequently missing among vocational administrators who are less than leaders. The following examples reflected this attitude among instructors:

> "The teachers and support staff welcomed such honesty from an administrator."

> "There is now a trusting atmosphere between administration and instructors."

- **Venturesome, Risk Taker**

The successful vocational administrator is willing to move beyond the status quo and take risks. Several administrators implied that taking risks was one of the reasons they were attracted to administrative positions:

> "Fifteen years ago I took over as director of this institution. The school was in turmoil. The ship was off its course. I was advised by many individuals not to take this position. This gave me all the more encouragement to do it."

> "This administrator knew that he was coming into a tough situation at this school because he came from a nearby district in the state."

It became evident that administrators believe you have to take risks to make great gains:

> "I knew that what I wanted to do was outside the normal role of a vocational center, but I believed that our school could provide some services that would help our local businesses."

However, sometimes successful vocational administrators took risks for reasons of principle rather than for potential gain:

> "I am sure that we are putting ourselves in a position for someone filing suit against us, but we are still committed to the original position of hiring a black dean."

Whatever the circumstances, successful vocational administrators often seemed venturesome:

> "I knew that I was placing myself in a tough position. The previous director was quite popular among the teachers, but yet he had placed the school in a crisis situation because of the way he operated it. So I knew that I could face some opposition when I started running this school more like a business."

Instructors appreciated it when their administrators did not always play it safe. The instructors saw and enjoyed the gains their schools made from their administrators' actions:

> "My administrator really stuck his neck out for this program. He felt like the risks were worth it since the school could acquire thousands of dollars of computer equipment for the students."

- **Emotionally Balanced**

The successful administrator is emotionally balanced. Perhaps one of the reasons successful vocational administrators tend to be risk takers and can tolerate stress is because of their emotional stability. Behaviors related to this attribute surfaced when administrators were faced with some challenging circumstances:

> "It had to be emotionally taxing on the administrator because one day the agency administering the funds would say the retraining program is on, and then on another day the agency would say the program is off. The administrator felt like his head was on the chopping block with the superintendent if our school did not receive the retraining program. Nevertheless, the administrator remained calm during the ordeal."

From the interviews, it seemed that secondary vocational administrators generally experienced more emotionally charged incidents with students than did postsecondary administrators. The administrators seemed to realize the explosiveness of these situations, and they acted in a manner which diffused the incidents. Regardless of how excited a particular student might be, the administrators remained calm yet firm:

> "The administrator remained emotionally stable when he dealt with the student."

Though administrators remain emotionally stable, they do not employ a laissez-faire approach. On the contrary, the goal of these leaders is to remain calm so that a logical, rational decision can be made. In some instances, this requires administrators to delay a decision until they can collect the needed information. The following statement from an instructor showed that he understands the need for this administrative behavior:

> "Initially, I think this administrator was thinking that he was not going to dismiss this student based on a snap judgment because both of us were frustrated over this situation. I don't feel that meant he was not backing me because he really did not have a lot of information."

The attribute, emotionally balanced, did not surface very often. In even the most trying of times, successful administrators were able to minimize the anxiety among their staff and students by remaining calm themselves.

- **Sense of Pride**

The successful vocational administrator has a strong sense of pride. Some of the examples provided by instructors and administrators suggested that the opportunity to experience pride is one of the appeals administration has for these leaders. As one administrator stated,

> "I feel great about this program. It is one of the highlights of the year. These students travel from all over the city, so some of them have to travel quite a distance."

Administrators not only have a sense of pride, they work hard to develop a sense of pride in others:

> "Our school improvement plan became the model plan for the system. The faculty and I became quite proud of that accomplishment. The process is still being used on an annual basis to solve a wide range of problems."
>
> "I also believe that our vocational institute became a source of pride for our board members and other community leaders."

Administrators recognize that the appearance of school facilities has an impact on one's pride in that school. As a result, they are constantly working to improve facilities. One instructor noted,

> "The administrator's major concern with the facilities was probably with the image our school projects. The administrator does everything he can to sell the school. However, these changes have had an impact on the faculty too. Because the environment is better, we feel better."

In the following example, an administrator was proud of the way the school had improved. The administrator suggested that it is good for a school to have to work hard to obtain student enrollment:

> "I now believe that we have one of the finest looking schools in the state. Our staff also seems to hustle a lot more that they did years ago when they just took enrollment for granted because of all the veterans."

Instructors realize that when administrators were proud of a program or school, administrators worked even harder to support it:

> "The director did not have to get as involved as he did in the state's agricultural curriculum. However, he believed that this school had one of the most progressive agricultural programs in the state, and he felt like the state was in effect penalizing us for being progressive."

- **Reflective**

The successful administrator grows professionally from both positive and negative experiences. Behaviors related to this attribute surfaced time and time again when administrators were asked to describe an incident that they would handle differently if they had it to do over again. Administrators seem to reflect on their actions and then try to gain insight from them. For instance, one successful administrator stated,

> "I should have kept in closer contact with the local superintendents. In retrospect, I now see that I should have done a great deal more work with the local superintendents before I even approached the state director of vocational education and the state superintendent."

Administrators agreed that the power of hindsight was great. However, many of them indicated that they would trade some of their hindsight for a little foresight:

> "In retrospect, what I should have done is spent more time on each of the campuses explaining the purpose of the climate survey so that I would not have been perceived as a hatchet man."

Successful administrators did not dwell on mistakes, but they did try to make certain that the same mistakes did not occur again:

> "I did learn one thing from this experience—that is, to check more closely who pays a high percentage of the tax base. In this incident, a major corporation supported twenty percent of the tax base, and the president of the corporation was a little upset with me for not coming to him first. Fortunately, I did work with him later and it turned out all right."

Another administrator significantly altered his approach to hiring employees once he realized the inadequacies of his previous approach:

> "However, looking back on this hiring process, I should have advertised and sought out interested candidates locally as well as within the state by contacting the various colleges and universities that prepare teachers for this specific trade. I have now changed my approach in hiring an employee. Now, before hiring an employee, I will conduct a broad comprehensive advertising campaign for the position with the school, local community, and letters to colleges and universities in the state that prepare vocational teachers."

Leaders tend to have a philosophical attitude toward their experiences. These vocational administrators recognized that negative experiences were going to occur and that it was best to learn from them so that something positive would be gained:

> "If I had this to do over again, I would probably follow the project a little closer. I think in a situation like this, it is very easy to rely on the expertise of consultants."

Administrators often recognized that a mistake has been made the instant it occurs. As a result, they frequently corrected the mistake before it had a serious impact:

> "Where I made my mistake was by not inviting some of my key staff members to attend these effective school workshops with me. However, I hope to correct this mistake by sending key staff members to some academy workshops this school year."

Ethical Cluster

The ethical cluster included three attributes: Commitment to the Common Good, Personal Integrity, and Moral Standards Consistent With Highest Values of Society/Profession.

- **Commitment to the Common Good**

The successful administrator is committed to activities that benefit a broad range of groups and clients. Administrators believe that they must work for the betterment of the entire student body, the staff, the institution, the community, and the vocational education enterprise. Several comments made by administrators convey the strong commitments they have to their students. One administrator communicated this feeling when discussing changes made in the institution:

> "I think the bottom line is to produce a graduate who is better prepared to get out in the world of work and be part of the community. I think the school is doing a better job of this because of the changes."

Another administrator commented on the implementation of a vocational honor society:

> "One of our goals is to raise the self-esteem of students because many of them have experienced a lot of failures in life. They have flunked in school and many of them come from broken homes and are victims of child abuse. The vocational honor society is just one of the many ways we try to make the students feel good about themselves."

When discussing the negotiation of a teaching contract, one administrator was quite vocal about concerns for student welfare:

> "Approximately thirty meetings were conducted, involving hundreds of hours, but we made significant changes in the contract. About ten to fifteen changes were made altogether. I was trying to change the contract to insure better access for students and improved quality of instruction."

Instructors also commented on the commitment shown by administrators. As one instructor put it,

> "The administrator is committed to helping all the students in the school. However, he is very concerned about meeting the needs of the handicapped and disadvantaged population."

Several remarks made by administrators reflected commitment to the institution:

> "I told these persons that the college has an obligation to hire the best candidate and that it must advertise its positions through the right publications to accomplish this."

> "I worked with this individual and his closest friend to make a determination as to what would be most effective for the whole of the organization and that individual."

Instructors also reflected on the institutional commitments shown by their administrators:

> "But this administrator worked very hard to get this project, realizing that it would help the area and the other school districts. Of course, it is going to help our school in general because of the student population."
>
> "He could have gone in another direction, but he analyzed that it was not in the best interest of our school."

Commitment to the community was evident in remarks made by several administrators. Speaking to a specific vocational education offering, one administrator stated,

> "As a result, I feel that our food service program would be doing a disservice to the community if it did not attempt to help the special needs students."

Another administrator said,

> "Then, I felt that the decisions I had made were in the best interests of the community."

An instructor spoke to an economic crisis in the state and how the administrator believed the community should be helped:

> "When the economic crisis hurt a lot of our adult population, the administrator felt like our school should do what it could to help them. Though this administrator had always supported adult education, he believed, because of these circumstances, that the school should place a stronger emphasis on meeting the adult population's needs. The administrator believed that the school needed to broaden its efforts to better meet the needs of the adults."

- **Personal Integrity**

The successful administrator is honest in thought and deed. Although behaviors related to this attribute were difficult to document, several administrators made comments that reflected their personal integrity:

> "I was concerned about how to handle a fair and equitable process with a diversity of ideas and yet focus on the overall mission and goals of the organization."

> "It bothers me as much when a person takes a dime from me as it would if he or she took a million dollars."

> "This situation was really out of my control. I guess I could have campaigned against him, but that would have been improper."

Instructors also made remarks about administrators' personal integrity. Relating to the initiation of a new program, one instructor noted,

> "However, I think the majority of the faculty took to the program because they trusted his judgment. They knew him well enough as a leader that they felt he would not take them down a path that would not be good for them."

An instructor who remembered when she was being interviewed for a position recalled,

> "This administrator was not concerned that I was a woman applying for a position that is traditionally taught by men. The administrator wanted to hire the best applicant for the job."

- **Moral Standards**

  The successful administrator maintains high moral standards. The small number of behaviors identified as being related to this attribute was probably a function of the attribute focus. Most people do not talk about their moral standards or the morality of others. When faced with a moral dilemma, one administrator made a difficult decision:

  > "I called this woman to inform her that she still owed the school for her son's tuition and that she would not be rehired. When I called, I was informed that she had been taken to the hospital and was not expected to live. I decided to rehire this woman so that her insurance would continue to cover her cancer treatments."

  An instructor commented on the moral standards maintained by an administrator:

  > "The administrator sincerely believed that the instructors deserved a salary increase as much as he did. As a result, the superintendent refused to accept a salary increase since the board was not planning to give the instructors a raise that year."

Human Relations Cluster

The human relations cluster consists of five attributes: Communication; Tact, Sensitivity, Respect; Motivating Others; Networking; and Concern. The Concern attribute was added to the Moss and Liang (1990) list based on analysis and identification of relevant behaviors.

- **Communication**

  The successful administrator is adept as a listener and oral and written communicator. Behaviors related to this attribute occurred in a majority of the events. Obviously, administrators must communicate if they intend to keep their jobs. Our analysis showed that successful administrators' communication skills extend well beyond what is minimally required. This was confirmed through statements made by instructors as well as administrators.

  Administrator communication encompasses a broad range of written activities, including the preparation of reports, proposals for funding, development plans, memoranda, and correspondence. The excerpts below provide a view of these types of activities:

> "I wrote a proposal and submitted it to the economic development administration of the federal government. The proposal was accepted and I acquired over a million dollars to start this school."
>
> "I wrote a report summarizing the findings of the climate survey and submitted it to the school board."
>
> "I then developed a white paper on computer-integrated manufacturing, using the experts in the organization to write particular sections."

Administrators are also actively engaged in oral communication. Examples provided below represent numerous situations where administrators told of their experiences speaking to large groups, small groups, and individuals:

> "I presented this idea to the school board and they supported the concept."
>
> "I shared with the architect what I thought the center should look like. I also provided information to the architect on what should be incorporated in the design to meet the center's needs."
>
> "It took a very extensive selling job on my part when I talked to the student body on several occasions. I explained to them the benefits, the values, and the involvement."

Many events included a variety of communication modes. The following comments revealed that the administrator does not always rely on one form of communication. Several communication forms may be skillfully woven together to accomplish important administrative objectives:

> "I published a report based on these findings and distributed it to all personnel, including administrators. I then called a session that included everyone. I told them that this report represented what I

> heard the personnel recommend. I then asked them to review my report."
>
> "She [the administrator] wrote a memo to my principal. I did not see the memo, but my principal informed me of it. Then she made arrangements to go out to the school and view the room and to talk with the principal and the vice principal. Then she got back to me."
>
> "The administrator presented the non-degree teacher salary schedule to the school board and they passed it. He then began disseminating parts of the schedule to the faculty through memos."

Successful administrators are also excellent listeners. Comments provided by instructors and administrators reflect this important skill:

> "I think the most difficult task for me, and the other administrators, was to learn to just sit and listen. We knew that if we did most of the talking at the committee meetings, the committee members would not contribute much."
>
> "I think that one of her [the administrator's] attributes is that she listens very well. She is probably one of the best listeners I have ever met."

Space limitations do not permit inclusion of other examples. However, it should be noted that administrators feel quite comfortable communicating with a variety of groups, ranging from legislators and business and industry officials to faculty members and students.

- **Tact, Sensitivity, Respect**

The successful administrator is respectful of others and uses tact and sensitivity when dealing with them. Administrators applied this attribute in many different settings and with a variety of individuals.

In the following instance, an administrator is dealing with a potentially explosive situation:

> "I had to recall the contracts and meet with the instructors in small groups to settle them down. I modified my plan and explained it to the instructors in small groups. I then reissued the contracts."

One administrator recalled when several instructors were fired:

> "They felt their human dignity had been preserved, and the situation was handled in a way in which they understood why it was being done. They may not have liked losing their jobs, but they liked the way in which it had been handled."

When faced with a similar personnel action, a second administrator stated,

> "At the time the tenured instructor was laid off, he was upset. But after I sat down and talked with him and shared with him some of the things I had documented over several years and showed him why I was doing this, he understood."

Administrators also show tact, sensitivity, and respect when dealing with students:

> "I remember I brought one student in to talk with her, and I recognized she had some very positive characteristics. However, she had been goofing off. I talked to her about her attitude and what she could be. I told her that I recognized that she had the characteristics to be a success, and I wondered what was standing in her way. I think she really appreciated me talking with her."

Instructors provided more behaviors related to this attribute than did administrators. Evidently, as recipients of this attribute's effect, the instructors were in the best position to judge its impact.

Some instructors commented on administrators' actions in faculty meetings. For example,

> "In his (the administrator's) discussion with the faculty, somehow he had the faculty members feeling that if they didn't participate, they were missing out on a great professional opportunity."

One instructor recalled a time when an administrator responded to people who had interrupted an important meeting:

> "She did it in a manner that was not offensive, but she let them know that they were not really doing what they were supposed to do. This may have been a small number of people, but there were enough for me to feel very uncomfortable. This was not a scolding, but a gentle reminder. She put them on track. It was a strong reminder."

Respect can be shown in a number of ways. In this case, an instructor is appreciative of the respect shown by an administrator:

> "The administrator believes that the instructors in this school are experts in their respective fields. As a result, he lets us do our jobs. He does not try to run our programs for us."

Sometimes, collective bargaining can affect the ways administrators deal with their subordinates. An instructor describes how an administrator was successful in spite of the constraints:

> "I felt what this administrator did in coming to talk with us personally was the one thing he did on a one-to-one basis that did more to firm up the good relationship between the administration and our faculty and myself. He did this rather than just follow the administrative guidelines for handling grievances."

- **Motivating Others**

The successful administrator stimulates others to action. Administrators motivate persons both within and outside the organization. Several administrators commented on their experiences motivating faculty members:

> "I believe the way I presented the system to the faculty sold them on it. They did want to get involved in establishing the criteria. I also think now they feel much more comfortable with the evaluation process."

> "However, when the school landed the scanning electron microscope, I began to think that the [quality] circle had not set its aspirations too high. This success had a real motivating effect on all those involved."

Comments made by several administrators reflect their prowess at motivating persons in the community:

> "In addition to having asked several persons to write letters and make phone calls, I persuaded four businessmen to travel with me to the capital and talk with our legislators."

> "I then presented the idea. We got the staff enthused about this project. We got the community enthused. This shows you what you can do when you get everyone working together."

Instructors are quick to comment on the ways they were motivated by administrators. Several examples of this follow:

> "The administrator felt like she needed to motivate the staff to work on getting the mileage increase. This was one of the reasons she thought it was necessary to show the staff all the details about where the increased funding would go."

> "The administrator has successfully reduced the discontent and mistrust among the staff. The school has also become more

> positive. The meeting made the instructors reevaluate themselves and, as a result, most of the faculty are now much more positive."

Instructors noted that administrators use a variety of strategies and incentives when they want to motivate others:

> "Though the administrator wants our school to lead the state in what it has to offer its students, he employs a lot of different strategies to motivate the instructors to want to become involved in new programs."

> "He did provide some incentives for going through the training. For example, he made provisions for employees to attend training sessions during school time, or he provided extra money for those individuals who received the training after school. The administrator wanted everyone to go through the training as fast as possible."

- **Networking**

The successful administrator coordinates and collaborates with others for the betterment of the organization. Networking is a process that is tied to one or more outcomes. Although administrators seem to maintain a number of networks, their reasons for networking are related to areas such as improving institutional visibility, obtaining equipment, obtaining funding, updating and improving the curriculum, and building constituencies.

Several administrators provided indications of their reasons for engaging in networking:

> "We knew that if we were to get any money, we would have to get somebody in the legislature to push it for us. In addition, we had to gain the confidence of the Commissioner of Education. I think we received this money because we got the community behind us from the start."

> "Through having these dinner meetings, industry will become more aware of what the Center has to offer."
>
> "Many major institutions wanted that piece of equipment, but our school got it. One of our part-time engineering instructors and I worked closely with the company to accomplish this."
>
> "The consultant, the deputy superintendent, and I contacted forty-four companies in this metropolitan area. We selected these companies because we determined they employed high technology [workers]. The three of us then planned a meeting and invited the companies to send their representatives."

Instructors are very much aware of the networking skills their administrators possess. They were sometimes in awe of what administrators accomplished through networking:

> "This administrator promoted the training program. It probably would not have happened had it not been for him and his involvement in the community."
>
> "He got together enough legislative support that this institution and one other district in the state were given one-time bail out monies for that year. This had never been done before. No one institution or one man had ever been convincing enough for the state legislature to recognize their troubles."

Instructors also noted that administrators maintained numerous networks in the schools and the community:

> "The first year on the job he spent the majority of his time visiting the county boards to get acquainted with them. He has spent a lot of time visiting with the business and industry representatives in the district, the high schools in the district, and the various community service organizations. He joined the chamber of commerce and was president of this organization last year."

> "This administrator has had a lot of contacts with people in the community about training in their facilities."

- **Concern**

The successful administrator shows interest in what staff members are doing and is concerned about their welfare. Behaviors related to this attribute were drawn almost exclusively from events provided by instructors. Again, the receivers were in the best position to judge quality. Instructors felt that administrators provided support in a number of ways: expressions of appreciation, recognizing contributions, providing thanks for work well done, recognizing other persons' strengths, showing a genuine interest in what others are doing, and providing general support in time of personal need.

With regard to an accreditation visit, one instructor remarked,

> "The president was very confident that the faculty would be successful for the accreditation team. The staff appreciated this and they felt good that the administrator had so much confidence in them."

Another instructor explained the supportive nature of an administrator:

> "This administrator is very good at recognizing individuals who work for her. For example, I have just finished helping a counselor who was working to put together an annual report. This was the first annual report we had done. It took a lot of effort. This administrator let us know that she appreciated our efforts. In fact, she even sent me flowers. In addition, she expressed her appreciation for our efforts in front of other employees."

Administrators gave individual support when needed. In the following case, an instructor was in need of support and the administrator provided it:

> "This administrator then called the instructor in. She [the administrator] realized this instructor had a great deal of potential, so she talked to the instructor. The instructor still wanted to stay at

> this school. This administrator assured the instructor she would give him as much support as she could possibly give without showing any type of favoritism."

When an administrator made an unannounced visit to an evening class, the class instructor provided this commentary:

> "I thought it was nice that this man had the interest to come into the school in the evening. He actually came into the classroom to see what was going on. He was not threatening at all. He was really interested in what I was doing. I liked that."

Management Cluster

The management cluster developed by Moss and Liang (1990) included nine attributes; however, four of these were excluded from analysis. The decision was made to eliminate these attributes due to lack of attribute clarity and because of the potential for misinterpretation of behaviors. The remaining five consisted of Planning, Organizing and Implementing, Group Process and Team Building, Coaching, and Conflict Management. An attribute titled Resourceful was added to this cluster based on data from the study.

- **Planning**

  The successful administrator is actively involved in planning. A number of planning-related behaviors emerged from the interview process. These behaviors revealed that administrators spend a great amount of time planning. One example of a successful administrator planning for a levy is described by an instructor as follows:

> "The administrator then shared with the faculty a strategy on getting more money—some of which would be used for salary increases. This administrator told the faculty that she needed our support in acquiring some of the additional monies. The administrator stated that she planned to present a levy to the community."

Of those instructors who talked about their successful administrators being good planners, many described how their successful administrators planned for evaluations and accreditation visits. One instructor stated,

> "This administrator is a good long-range planner, and the faculty know this. He gave the staff plenty of time and assistance in preparing for the accreditation visit."

While some of the administrator interviews related to planning involve budgeting, evaluations, student financial aid, extracurricular activities, termination of instructors, and program restructure, most focused on economic development/ working with business and industry and remodeling/building plans. One administrator recalled an economic development plan by saying,

> "It was a plan that I put together that was adopted by the board. The plan contained an outline of all the ways the institution would proactively articulate with business and industry in our region. That document became a blueprint for where the institution was going as far as economic development. The major thrust of the blueprint became our plan."

A second successful administrator explained,

> "One of the first things I did was to hire a consultant to assist our school in strengthening its relationship with business and industry. The consultant, the deputy superintendent, and I developed our strategy. I then presented the school board with the plan."

Administrators also talk about remodeling/building plans for their institutions. One administrator recalled,

> "I developed a plan where space was added to the back of the building, some shops were moved and upgraded, and rooms were added inside the building."

Another administrator stated,

> "I have a building plan for the expansion, and I am presently working with our legislators on getting it on next year's budget."

- **Organizing and Implementing**

The successful administrator spends a great deal of time and is skillful at organizing and implementing. Most of the behaviors generated through instructor interviews related to administrators organizing and implementing for institutional visibility, image enhancement, and staff development activities. Behaviors associated with administrator interviews related to organizing and implementing institutional planning and institutional reorganization.

An instructor discussed how an administrator organized and implemented visibility and image enhancement at an institution as follows:

> "This administrator pulled together the forces already on campus and coordinated them into a real marketing effort. I feel he took this as a leadership challenge and succeeded. The faculty are generally pleased with the visibility and image enhancement because it has given them more prestige in the eyes of their peers."

Another instructor explained the efforts of an administrator to organize and implement visibility and the image of the institution in a different way:

> "This administrator has drastically changed the appearance of the interior of the school. Halls and classrooms have been painted and most of the offices have been remodeled. This administrator has also instigated some modifications to the building to make it more desirable for new industry to use while they establish their own facilities."

Staff development opportunities organized and implemented for instructors by administrators also emerged from the instructor interviews. One instructor commented,

> "This administrator arranged to pay our way to the national conference. We thought we were going to have to pay for it out of our own funds, which would have put a dent in our budget."

Another instructor remarked,

> "The administrator acquired some extra funding so that he could put together a two-week workshop. Filing cabinets, folders, and other office supplies were purchased for the instructors. This administrator paid the instructional staff to attend this two-week workshop [in addition to their contracts]. He arranged secretarial assistance for the teachers."

Administrators talk about organizing and implementing on a broader scale than instructors. These administrators often commented in this way when talking about the entire institution. In describing the organization and implementation of institutional planning, one successful administrator stated,

> "Then, the deputy superintendent, the consultant, and I developed a two-year cycle. Phase one was the feasibility study. In this phase we identified the program areas, did the preliminary curriculum design, and did the facility design. In phase two, we developed the core curriculum and hired staff members for the programs. Phase three included the recruitment and enrollment of students and the implementation of staff development. I then led the way for the construction of the High Tech Center in two phases. When the facilities were ready, we implemented the programs."

Another successful administrator explained,

> "I established a planning process and put it in place. I organized a 'bottom up' as well as a 'top down' planning process. It involved the Board, administrative staff, faculty, and support staff."

Still another administrator described how he approached reorganizing the institution by implementing and organizing a quality process. This administrator commented,

> "In cooperation with my cabinet and after putting the basic structure of the campus in place, we issued guidelines. We gave each of the departments in the institution guidelines and a timetable to reorganize their own departments. Currently, I am developing a team of managers, who are meeting in retreat, to develop a generic description of what characteristics a manager should have in a quality-based institution."

One administrator recalled the following:

> "The superintendent, the director of secondary education, and I created seven different committees. We then established the policy that these committees would meet at least once a month with one or more administrators. I was aware that I was in a unique situation because I had the opportunity to assist in the development of an organizational structure from scratch."

In addition to the aforementioned comments, instructors stated that successful administrators organized and implemented individualized instruction, institutional renovations, institutional goals, instruction for business and industry, meetings, work ethics projects, and new programs. Administrators described themselves as organizing and implementing effective school measures programs, quality process programs, and institutional visibility and image enhancement.

Group Process and Team Building

The successful administrator employs group process and team building techniques. Several group process and team building behaviors emerged from the interview process. Instructors seemed to talk about this more than administrators talked about it themselves. While administrators commented on group process and team building behaviors as they related to school decisions and building support, instructors talked about them in relation to funding for programs, committee assignments, school decisions, and building support. Other group process and team building behaviors that instructors recalled related to formulation of policy, selection of equipment, budgeting, school renovations, and institutional goal development. In addition, administrators mentioned these behaviors in regards to business and industry relations, identification of problems, and team management.

For example, in referring to committee assignments an instructor stated,

> "This administrator has involved the instructors by having us serve on various committees. The function of these committees has been to collect information and to provide input on many of the major decisions."

Another instructor talked about group process and team building related to the development of institutional goals and objectives:

> "This administrator wanted to develop a set of goals and objectives for the entire institution with everybody having input. He also invited individuals to write to him to communicate their problems and their ideas about selections of middle management personnel. He responded to a letter I wrote him. I thought the fact that this administrator wanted us to help develop a set of goals and objectives was very impressive. This was totally different from the former administrator."

An instructor at the same institution talked about the same successful administrator regarding the development of goals. This instructor commented,

> "One of the first things this administrator did when he came to this institution was to bring us together in small groups and have us work out lists of goals that we wanted for the next five years. Of course, public visibility and image enhancement was always the top goal."

A different instructor commented on how a successful administrator built the support of school board members, faculty, and others through group process and team building as follows:

> "One of the first things this administrator did was to hold a retreat for the school board members. During this retreat, the administrator explained how the vocational center was financed and got to know the board members better. The administrator in effect provided a training session for the board members on federal, state, and local funding."

> "This administrator said that she needed our [the faculty's] help to get the levy passed. She explained that school money and resources could not be used for the election. The administrator then asked the staff to donate some time and money to help get the levy passed. The administrator and many staff members bought envelopes and wrote letters to all the persons who had taken advantage of any of the vocational center's services. This administrator met with all the surrounding superintendents and informed them of her intentions."

Another instructor interview focused on how a successful administrator sought to build the support of employees of sending schools through group process and team building. This instructor recalled,

> "This administrator got all the instructors, principals, and superintendents to attend this dinner. It was more or less getting everyone together to establish a better relationship between sending schools and vocational schools."

Still another instructor stated that an administrator used group process and team building behaviors to help make school decisions. This instructor commented,

> "This administrator delegates a lot of responsibility to us. I say a lot, but I don't mean it in such a way as it is too much. I like that about him. When we come up with questions during meetings, this administrator will tell us to decide. He says we are the professionals, and we should decide. Everyone has some input. Sometimes we come up with a decision and we all agree. Other times we are in a meeting and each of us will have our own ideas.

> Then, this administrator will say let's go with this or that. Of course, that would solve any disagreements among instructors."

An administrator commented on group process and team building related to making school decisions as follows:

> "Though I was very much in favor of the seven-period day, I was aware of the need for this to be a bottom-up decision instead of a top-down decision. I knew a mandate from the administrators would not work. Consequently, I saw my role as a facilitator."
>
> "Eventually, the committee reached a consensus that the school should employ a seven-period schedule. Sure, not all the school instructors agreed with this decision. However, by using the group process, the dissension was minimized. The committee had discussed every consideration of the schedule change so extensively that its members could counter every argument against it."

Another administrator talked about using group process and team building in seeking the support of school board members:

> "I then arranged to take all the board members to three different vocational centers. The board members and I loaded in a van at 7:00 a.m. and returned from the schools at 10:00 p.m. In touring these other area schools, I was able to show the school board members that our school needed a lot of attention. One of these area vocational centers was in a much poorer district than ours, and it is a growing, dynamic school."

The study also included an interview with an administrator who described the use of group process and team building in the teacher evaluation process. This administrator stated,

> "During teacher orientation, the superintendent and I asked all staff members to select a few committees that they would like to serve on. Based on these requests, and our goal to have a broad

> representation, we then issued committee assignments. I then asked one committee to assist in developing performance objectives for which they would be evaluated on. I felt like it was very important to allow the teachers the opportunity to contribute to the type of evaluation they would experience. I think that when teachers have input on their own evaluation, they feel better about the process. I also believe that the teachers welcomed the up-front characteristic of this evaluation process. In other words, the teachers welcomed the opportunity to know beforehand exactly what they would encounter in their evaluation."

- **Coaching**

The successful administrator works closely with others to improve their capabilities. Only a few coaching behaviors emerged from the administrator and instructor interviews. Of those interviews containing coaching behaviors, most related to institutional evaluations. In addition, almost twice as many instructor interviews as administrator interviews contained administrator coaching behaviors. In preparing for an evaluation, an instructor commented,

> "This administrator reviewed and checked the work as it was developed. He praised and he suggested. The administrator did ask some staff members to make revisions on what they had done because it was not up to his standards of excellence."

A successful administrator described how faculty members were coached by making visits to business and industry and the community:

> "I really don't require the faculty to become involved in improving the school image except in a very subtle way. If the faculty do not go out and openly participate, I try to go with them or plan activities that we can do together. If I go with them and show them it is not so bad, it encourages the faculty members. It also gives me an opportunity to understand how they feel."

- **Conflict Management**

The successful administrator deals effectively with conflict. While only a few conflict management behaviors emerged from the interviews, almost twice as many of these behaviors were coded in the instructor interviews as in the administrator interviews. The majority of the conflict management behaviors in the instructor interviews dealt with parent/student and instructor confrontations. Most of the administrator interviews dealt with instructor and staff confrontations.

An example of an instructor interview that described a confrontation with a parent follows:

> "One day the mother of this student came to the school to speak with this administrator. This administrator met with her and she told the administrator that the air was making her daughter ill and she expected him to do something about it. The administrator then told the mother how pleasant it was to meet with a concerned parent. He told the mother that he knew that she wanted what was best for her daughter. This administrator said that he, too, was concerned about the girl's health. He then suggested to the mother that the daughter be removed from the business classes at the vocational school and be returned to the high school."

An administrator recalled being approached by instructors about a cut in the budget for materials. This administrator explained,

> "A couple of teachers came to me and complained. These teachers basically said that this never had happened to them with the previous administrator. I politely explained to them that was why he was gone and I was at the school now. I also added that I was not as concerned about their cut in materials as I was about the possibility that they would not have jobs the next school year."

- **Resourceful**

The successful administrator is an efficient manager of resources. Resource management behaviors primarily appeared in the instructor interviews, and the majority of these resource management behaviors related to the acquisition of equipment.

An instructor described resource management behaviors of an administrator as follows:

> "This administrator believed that this proposal was a way that the school could acquire some new equipment. He saw this CAD training program as a way to help local industry, the community, and our school. Funding is tight right now. So this administrator believes in acquiring equipment through whatever methods he can."

A second instructor commented,

> "This administrator is very conservative with money. He believes that this vocational center should try to be self-supporting. This administrator has never floated a bond issue in all the years that he has been in this district. Consequently, he is constantly looking for ways to pay for the expansions and improvements he wants to make. He feels that the community should be spared any more taxes if at all possible."

One administrator summarized a resourceful behavior through the use of in-house labor to maintain and upgrade the institution. This administrator stated,

> "For the inside of the institution, I got the electricity program to install new lighting fixtures. Then, I got the building trades program to paint some of the interior. All the shops did extensive cleaning. Not only did they get junk hauled off, but they also got rid of all the grease and dirt. We are not like some institutions; we have limited funds. So it was essential that we do all the work we could ourselves."

Cognitive Cluster

The cognitive cluster included three attributes: Decision-Making, Problem-Solving, and Information Gathering and Managing. Attributes associated with this cluster appeared to be supportive of each other. As we identified behaviors related to these attributes, it became evident that a pattern of activity was emerging. The typical administrator would have a problem that needed to be solved or a change that needed to be made. A likely first step was to gather information about the topic. This was followed by making a decision or series of decisions. Interspersed in this process might be some planning, organizing, group process and team building, and communication activities. Eventually, the problem would be solved or the change would be made. The point to be made is that attributes must be dealt with collectively as well as individually. It is clear that the successful administrator does not deal with decision-making, problem-solving, and information gathering in isolation. This person must be able to articulate attributes within this cluster as well as across other clusters and do so with great precision and sophistication.

- **Decision-Making**

  The successful administrator makes informed decisions based on relevant information, giving consideration to contexts within which decisions must be made. Administrators make a variety of decisions. These decisions range from policy and personnel decisions to construction and programming decisions. Decisions are often made based on some sort of input (i.e., available or gathered information). In the statements that follow, administrators reflect on decisions they made:

> "After talking with the governor and with business and industry leaders, I decided that our center needed to open a business and industry service center."
>
> "From what I had read in the literature, I became convinced that our school needed to place more of an emphasis on computers."
>
> "After talking with these directors, I decided to write a proposal for our school the next time this particular single parent homemaker's program came up for bid."

Sometimes, administrators use experience as a basis for deciding to go back to what previously existed:

> "Just recently in a meeting, the vice-presidents and I decided to dissolve the JTPA department and return to the organizational structure that was in place before this year."

As the previous example indicated, group decisions were also made. As one instructor states,

> "Through these meetings, the administrator, the director of secondary education, and I decided that there were eight key areas that we needed to address."

An administrator commented on a personnel problem and decision:

> "I consulted with the superintendent and we decided not to renew the evening business instructor's contract."

There are times when administrators must make tough decisions. The following statements describe these difficult tasks:

> "Then I essentially had to cut everyone's operating expenses. The programs that had the lowest enrollments, I cut the most. In doing this I made a few enemies."

> "I also eliminated a couple of programs that always had low enrollments and were not meeting industry's needs. In essence, I started running this school like a business. If courses were not cost productive, I eliminated them."

> "He [the administrator] could have gone in another direction, but he analyzed that it was not in the best interest of our school. Subsequently, he pulled the offer to work with that client."

Administrators are often creative decision-makers. In the following situation, an instructor commented on how an administrator decided to muster support for a tax levy:

> "However, the administrator was concerned about creating too much publicity about the levy for fear that it could be detrimental in the long run. This is why she decided that it might be wise to contact all the school's past students and ask for their support."

- **Problem-Solving**

The successful administrator confronts and deals successfully with a wide range of problems. Due to the nature of the interviews, administrators and instructors tended to discuss complex problems. The comprehensive nature of problems encountered may be best described using the following example from an instructor:

> "This administrator came along and picked up and went right on with the preparation for the open house with all the problems that happened to come about. He handled all of the problems very well. During this time, we had a number of other problems come up. I think we were sued by the school board. This administrator resolved that problem, and we probably have a better relationship now with county officials. So no matter what the problem is, this administrator looks at it very objectively. He forms a plan and takes steps to resolve the problem."

An administrator also commented about a complex problem that arose when construction funding was delayed:

> "We called a meeting of the area superintendents and explained the problem and hired a bond counsel, a specialized attorney, to handle this for us. It took about six weeks of time plus some special meetings by some of the local school boards to properly act on the resolution in concert with the advertising that was being done. And we are now through that process. At the same time, we were working with a local bank to advance some money to us so we could pay some construction bills."

Administrators may take a number of approaches to deal with a problem. As this instructor put it,

> "He [the administrator] does not believe one strategy or approach is sufficient to solve the enrollment problem. Consequently, the administrator has employed numerous strategies to increase the enrollment."

Persons often collaborate in the solving of problems. The following statements showed the use of group processes in identifying solutions to problems:

> "The vice chancellor left it up to us and we [the administrator and others] solved the problem locally without having much help from the state board of regents. They supported us and were knowledgeable of the situation."

> "When the other directors or I experienced problems in the implementation process of one of our programs, we talked to one another and developed strategies to cope with the problems."

> "For example, when one committee member stated that some of the support staff did not have enough time for lunch because they had to wait in the long lunch line, I asked the committee to bring possible solutions to the problem to our next meeting. In the next meeting one committee member suggested allowing staff members to go through the lunch line at 10:50 to beat the crowd. The committee and I supported this solution, and it was adopted."

Information Gathering and Managing

The successful administrator is skillful at obtaining and utilizing relevant information. Behaviors related to this attribute appeared in one-third of the events. These behaviors support the notion that administrators rely heavily on information during the course of their day-to-day activities. Our analysis pointed out that information gathering and managing are clearly tied to other actions—primarily problem-solving, decision-making, planning, organizing, implementing, and communication. This attribute is more of a means to an end than an end in itself.

Information is gathered in a variety of ways. Administrators may review literature, administer surveys, observe activities, have discussions with others, and conduct needs assessments. Sometimes information is gathered as "evidence" to be used in the future. The statements below are representative of the many ways used to gather information:

> "I then distributed a questionnaire that the consultant, the deputy superintendent, and I had developed. From the data obtained through the questionnaire, we determined that these high technology companies had needs in four areas."
>
> "One of the first things I did was observe the food service instructor teach."
>
> "I then contacted the state department and acquired assistance from a few state department personnel in administering this survey. The state department personnel and I administered the climate survey to two campuses."
>
> "The three of us familiarized ourselves with the literature on the team management approach. Then we met several times and discussed specific components of the management approach that would be most suitable for the situation."
>
> "However, the counselor, the adult coordinator and I had well documented all of our actions with the student. As a result, I knew I had a strong case."

Administrators gathered information from a variety of sources. They visited other schools; talked to staff members; and sought input from business, industry, and the community. Several comments provided by administrators and instructors seemed to capture the flavor of these sources as well as some of the reasons behind the gathering of information:

> "I think this administrator called me initially because I was in the school and she wanted my input. She wanted to know what my assessment of the situation was. I don't know if she does this often with other individuals. But she calls on me often because I worked

in the vocational division as a staff member before coming to teach at this school."

"One of the first things I did was to collect data on the surrounding area vocational centers. Basically, I found out what the schools were spending annually on equipment purchases and on building maintenance."

"With that, we supplied this administrator with the information. He evaluated it. He had a couple of questions and was satisfied."

"He [the administrator] and the new vice-president, went out to business and industry and found out what the school could do to better meet their needs. The administrator discovered that the school needed to offer more off-campus classes."

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Conclusions

The interview process generated rich descriptions of activities involving successful vocational education administrators as well as what these administrators think and feel and how they act when performing these activities. The process also took into account various contexts within which leadership behaviors occurred, and provided instructors' perspectives about how administrators demonstrated leadership.

Results support the notion that vocational education administration is a complex, dynamic, and multifaceted process. The successful administrator approaches administrative responsibilities in a holistic manner. When something is to be accomplished, the administrator draws from a range of attributes, selecting and applying from this repertoire to suit the situation, the context, and the people involved.

The support that identified behaviors lend to Moss and Liang's (1990) listing of leader attributes is most encouraging. Even though several attributes were linked to a small number of behavior examples, many attributes could be tied to a host of relevant behaviors. Fewer behaviors were identified for attributes such as intelligence with practical judgment, achievement-oriented, and emotionally balanced. Comments associated with these attributes did not emerge as much in various conversations. This may have been a function of the research methodology used in that persons were not asked to respond to or rate themselves against specific attributes. Since behaviors were coded from stories presented by administrators and instructors, the interviewees may have tended to overlook administrators' more commonly accepted background characteristics.

The various types of events discussed by administrators and instructors provide some food for thought. Interviewees discussed events that demonstrated effectiveness as an administrator. In the case of administrators, additional events were discussed that, due to hindsight, would be handled differently if done over again. The extent to which these events represent typical day-to-day activities is not known. However, we are reasonably confident that events represent times when administrators operate at "full power" in challenging situations. That is, they are faced with complex and difficult challenges, and they apply their skills, knowledge, and experience to deal with them. The event types may then constitute a different sort of categorization scheme; one that can be considered for use during more detailed analysis of leader behavior and when leadership development programs are being devised. For example, preparing administrators to be change agents appears to be as important as preparing them to "deal with a staff or student problem" and "participate in a face-to-face situation."

Implications for Practice

The Preparation of Vocational Education Administrators

Future vocational education administrator preparation programs should target in on key leader attributes and ensure that these attributes are accounted for in the preparation experience. The attribute list from Moss and Liang (1990), with attribute additions and supporting behaviors generated by this study, may, with additional research, provide a meaningful framework for reconceptualizing how future vocational education leaders are to be prepared. Such a preparation program must not stop with the mastery of individual attributes. It must extend to instruction that incorporates the integration and application of these attributes in a variety of realistic settings. Finally, consideration should be given to development of the case studies or critical incidents for use in courses, workshops, and seminars. These experiences could be drawn from the two hundred and seventy-two separate events described by administrators and instructors who participated in this study.

The Practicing Vocational Education Administrator

Although there are a number of vocational education administrators across the United States who are quite successful, some may be only marginally qualified or less than adequately prepared for their current jobs. Others may not possess some of the leadership attributes that are documented by this study. A logical next step in the evolution of vocational education leadership development is provision for programs that will help vocational education administrators to achieve their greatest potential. This professional development approach would logically be both diagnostic and prescriptive. Work currently underway at the University of Minnesota site of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education focuses on the development of an instrument that will be used by administrators to determine what their strengths are and in what areas they need to improve. Such an instrument, coupled with learning experiences that will meet individual administrator needs for improvement, can have great positive impact on the field.

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Appendix A

Moss and Liang Leader Attributes

MOSS AND LIANG LEADER ATTRIBUTES

I. CHARACTERISTICS

A. Physical

1. Energetic with stamina

B. Intellectual

2. Intelligent with practical judgment
3. Insightful
4. Adaptable, open, flexible
5. Creative, original visionary
6. Tolerant of ambiguity and complexity

C. Personal

7. Achievement-oriented
8. Willing to accept responsibility
9. Assertive, initiating
10. Confident, accepting of self
11. Courageous, resolute, persistent
12 Enthusiastic, optimistic
13. Tolerant of stress and frustration
14. Trustworthy, dependable, reliable
15. Venturesome, risk taker
16. Emotionally balanced

D. Ethical

17. Commitment to the common good
18. Personal integrity
19. Evidences highest values and moral standards

II. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

A. Human Relations

20. Communicating with others
21. Tactful, sensitive, respectful
22. Motivating others
23. Networking

B. Management

24. Planning
25. Organizing
26. Team building
27. Coaching
28. Managing conflict
29. Managing time and organizing personal affairs
30. Managing stress
31. Using leadership styles appropriately
32 Holding ideological beliefs appropriate to the group

C. Cognitive

33. Decision-making
34. Problem-solving
35. Gathering and managing information

Appendix B

State-Level Interview Schedule

STATE-LEVEL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

---

1. Date and time:_________/_________/1989 _________:_________ am pm
2. Interviewee's name: ______________________________
3. Gender: ______________________________
4. State Department: ______________________________
5. Position: ______________________________
6. Interviewer's name: ______________________________

(Start)

Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________, I am a researcher from Virginia Tech working with a National Center for Research in Vocational Education project. We are currently identifying leadership characteristics of highly successful vocational administrators. With your assistance, this study should lead to improving vocational administrator preparation. The interview I want to conduct should last no more than 30 minutes. Is now a good time for our interview? ______________

I first want to tell you that our conversation will be kept confidential. With the exception of the interview schedule I am using today, all information will be coded and results will be reported without references to specific persons or states.

Do you have any questions or comments before we start?

7. First, I need to know what characteristics you think a vocational/occupational administrator must have to be successful?

A. ____________________
B. ____________________
C. ____________________
D. ____________________
E. ____________________
F. ____________________
G. ____________________
H. ____________________
I. ____________________
J. ____________________
K. ____________________
L. ____________________
M. ____________________

Now, I would like you to help me by identifying four to eight individuals who are the most successful vocational administrators in your state. First, keep in mind that we are looking for the most successful line administrators from both resource-rich and resource-poor locations. By line administrators, we mean __________________ (directors, principals, presidents) who are in charge of ______________________ (area vocational schools, vocational centers, technical colleges). Also, we are looking for persons who have had at least three years of experience as administrators. Please give me their names and addresses one at a time and some reasons why you are nominating them.

(one page per nominee)

1. Name: ____________________
2. Title: ____________________
3. School: ____________________
4. Location: ____________________
5. Phone: ____________________
6. How long have you known this person? __________ years
7. Now I want you to give a list of characteristics you think Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________ has that makes him/her so successful? For each characteristic I would like a brief example of how the characteristic is demonstrated by Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________.

Characteristic	**Brief Example (min. 2-3)**
A.	A.
B.	B.
C.	C.
D.	D.
E.	E.
F.	F.
G.	G.

Now before the interview ends, I would just like to be sure my information is accurate.

8. Your official job title is ____

9. What are your job responsibilities?

____

____

____

____

____

10. A. How long have you held this position?

____________ years

B. How long have you been employed by the State Department of Education?

____________ years

11. A. What types of communication do you have with vocational administrators?

______________________ phone
______________________ letter
______________________ face-to-face
______________________ other

B. How frequently do you communicate with vocational administrators?

______________________ daily
______________________ weekly
______________________ monthly

The names you have provided will be compiled on a list with nominations from other state department personnel. From this list we will select administrators to be interviewed. It could be that a particular administrator you have nominated is not interviewed. For this reason, I would appreciate it if you kept our conversation confidential. I assure you I will.

Mr./Ms./Dr. __________________________, I have certainly enjoyed meeting and talking with you today. Your assistance has been invaluable, and I appreciate you taking time out from your busy schedule for this interview.

Thanks once again.

Appendix C

Administrator Interview Schedule

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

---

1. Date and time: ________/________/1989 ________:________ am pm
2. Interviewee's name: ______________________________
3. Gender: ______________________________
4. Place of employment: ______________________________
5. Position: ______________________________
6. Interviewer's name: ______________________________

(Start)

Hello Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________. This is ____________________ with Virginia Tech and the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. I'm calling about the interview we discussed earlier. Is now still a good time for the interview? ________________ (If not) When would be a good time? ________________ The interview should take a little over one hour to complete, and if it looks like we are going too long, I will negotiate with you on what to do.

Again, the purpose of this interview is to identify what abilities are important to leadership in vocational education, so that we can better prepare vocational administrators. This interview focuses on how you perceive administrative leadership in the context of your work in the institution.

Before the interview actually begins, let me say your responses will be kept confidential. I will be taking notes, but I sometimes have trouble reading my writing. Would you mind if we record the interview? ________________ (If no) If there is anything you don't want me to record, just let me know and I'll turn off the recorder. Please feel free to interrupt, ask for clarification, or even comment about a question.

Do I have your permission to turn on the tape recorder now?

Secondary

7. Could you describe a typical work day for me? If yesterday was typical, it would be fine to describe it. (Probe for specific details of how this person goes about doing his/her work.) (Avoid concepts—we want raw data.)

A. What time did you arrive at your office? ____________

B. 1. When do faculty usually arrive? ____________
  2. What are you doing at this time? ____________

C. 1. What is the earliest time that students start to arrive? ____________
  2. What are you usually doing at this time? ____________

D. 1. What time do classes begin? ____________
  2. How long are the classes? ____________
  3. When are the breaks? ____________
  4. Is your work day usually influenced by the beginning and ending of classes and breaks? ____________
  5. In what way? ____________

F. 1. How long is lunch time? ____________
  2. Are there more than one? ____________
  3. Do you usually take your lunch at the same time? ____________
  4. What did you do yesterday during lunch? ____________

G. 1. When do students usually leave? ____________
  2. What do you usually do at this time of day? ____________
  3. What time did you leave? ____________

H. 1. Who directs the evening program? ____________
  2. When do evening students usually arrive? ____________
  3. When do evening students usually leave? ____________

Postsecondary

7. Could you describe a typical work day for me? If yesterday was typical, it would be fine to describe it. (Probe for specific details of how this person goes about doing his/her work.) (Avoid concepts—we want raw data.)

A. What time did you arrive at your office? ____________________

B. 1. When do faculty usually arrive? ____________________

2. What are you doing at this time? ____________________

____

____

C. 1. What is the earliest time that students start to arrive? ____________________

2. What are you usually doing at this time? ____________________

____

____

D. 1. What time do classes begin? ____________________

2. How long are the classes? ____________________

E. 1. Do you usually take your lunch at the same time? ____________________

2. What did you do yesterday during lunch? ____________________

____

____

F. What do you usually do at the end of the day? ____________________

____

____

____

G. What time do you usually leave? ____________________

H. Who directs the evening program? ____________________

Event #1

8. Now, I would like you to think of your first event. In order to help you do this, I want you to think of a time that you felt particularly effective as an administrator. This would be a time you felt like you accomplished something, a time you felt particularly good about your leadership. What I'm asking you to do is to think of a high point.

   A. What event would you like to talk about? (EVENT) ____________________

   ____

   ____

PROBES Specific> General	**BEHAVIOR** (What you/he/she did & why)	**THOUGHT/FELT** (You/others think or feel)	**EXAMPLES** (Specific)
Who was involved and how?			
What led up to the situation? Describe the situation.			
What happened?			
How did it all turn out? (outcome)			

Event #2

9. Great, I have a good understanding of that situation. It's just the kind of thing we are looking for. Now, I would like for you to think of another event where you were particularly effective. Again, this would be a time where you felt like you accomplished something, an incident where you felt particularly good about your leadership. What I'm asking you to do is to think of another high point.

   A. What event would you like to talk about? (EVENT) ____________________

   ____

   ____

PROBES Specific> General	**BEHAVIOR** (What you/he/she did & why)	**THOUGHT/FELT** (You/others think or feel)	**EXAMPLES** (Specific)
Who was involved and how?			
What led up to the situation? Describe the situation.			
What happened?			
How did it all turn out? (outcome)			

Event #3

10. Great, I have a good understanding of this situation. It would help us to even better understand the abilities important in leadership, if you would now think of a situation where, with the power of hindsight, you would alter your behavior in a similar situation. In other words, I'm looking for an event that you would handle differently if you had it to do over again.

    A. What event would you like to talk about? (EVENT) ____________________

    ____

    ____

PROBES Specific> General	**BEHAVIOR** (What you/he/she did & why)	**THOUGHT/FELT** (You/others think or feel)	**EXAMPLES** (Specific)
Who was involved and how?			
What led up to the situation? Describe the situation.			
What happened?			
How did it all turn out? (outcome)			

11. What one characteristic do you feel you have that contributes most to your being a successful administrator? ______________________________

____

12. What else do you feel you possess that helps you to perform your job effectively?

A. ______________________________

B. ______________________________

C. ______________________________

D. ______________________________

E. ______________________________

F. ______________________________

G. ______________________________

H. ______________________________

I. ______________________________

J. ______________________________

K. ______________________________

13. Briefly, what are your job responsibilities?

A. ______________________________

B. ______________________________

C. ______________________________

D. ______________________________

E. ______________________________

F. ______________________________

G. ______________________________

H. ______________________________

I. ______________________________

J. ______________________________

14. What is the title of the person who you report to? ______________________________

15. What are the titles of persons who report to you? ______________________________

____

____

16. How long have you held administrative positions? ____________ years

17. Have you held any other administrative positions prior to the one you now hold?

A. _________ yes

B. _________ no (go to question #19)

18. (If yes) What were the administrative positions that you have held previous to this one? (Titles) ____

____

____

19. How long have you been the administrator at this school? ____________ years

20. How many students are enrolled at your school?

_______ students _______ full-time _______ part-time

21. How many faculty members are employed at your school?

_______ faculty members ______ full-time ______ part-time

22. What is your highest level of schooling?

A. ______________ Some college or technical training

B. ______________ College graduate

C. ______________ Some graduate work

D. ______________ M.S./M.A.

E. ______________ Doctorate or other professional degree

23. I am going to read a list of experiences that might have helped prepare you for your present administrative position. If you would, tell me which ones helped you in becoming an administrator. It's quite possible that only one experience helped or all of them could have helped.

A. ___________ previous positions held in education (e.g., teacher, counselor, assistant director)

B. ___________ college education

C. ___________ industry/business experience

D. ___________ military experience

E. ___________ internship

F. ___________ other (be specific)

24. Now which of the following experiences contributed most in helping to prepare you to become an administrator? (Check one only)

A. __________ previous positions held in education (e.g., teacher, counselor, assistant director)
B. __________ college education
C. __________ industry/business experience
D. __________ military experience
E. __________ internship
F. __________ other (be specific)

Finally, I would like to interview several of your faculty members to get their feelings about the administration in your school.

25. Do I have your permission to interview faculty members over the telephone?

yes ________ (Go to #26)
no ________ (It would just take about 20 minutes to interview each person. The interview would be at the faculty member's convenience. They will be asked to describe just two events related to administration).

26. Could you give me the names of six faculty members that I can talk to? From this list we will interview two. If possible, I would like to have a mix of persons, possibly including different genders, races, ages, and educational levels.

School ____
Location (may be different) ______________________________

	Name	Phone #	Best time to interview
A.			
B.			
C.			
D.			
E.			
F.			

Well, Mr./Ms./Dr. ______________________, we have reached the end of the interview. I have certainly enjoyed talking with you today. Your assistance has been invaluable, and I appreciate you taking time from your busy schedule to help us out.

Thanks again and have a good day.

Good-bye.

Appendix D

Instructor Interview Schedule

INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

---

1. Date and time:__________/__________/1989 __________:__________ am pm
2. Interviewee's name: ______________________________
3. Gender: ______________________________
4. State Department: ______________________________
5. Position: ______________________________
6. Interviewer's name: ______________________________

(Start)

Hello Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________. This is ____________________ with Virginia Tech and the National Center for Research in Vocational Education. I'm calling about the interview we discussed earlier. Is now still a good time for the interview? ____________________ (If not) When would be a good time? ____________________

The interview should take about 45 minutes to complete, and if it looks like we are going too long, I will negotiate with you about what to do.

Again, the purpose of this interview is to identify what abilities are important to leadership in vocational education, so that we can better prepare vocational administrators. This interview focuses on how you perceive administrative leadership in the context of your work in the institution.

Before the interview actually begins, let me say your responses will be kept confidential. I will be taking notes, but I sometimes have trouble reading my writing. Would you mind if we record the interview? ____________________ (If no) If there is anything you don't want me to record, just let me know and I'll turn off the recorder. Please feel free to interrupt, ask for clarification, or even comment about a question.

Do I have your permission to turn on the tape recorder now?

7. Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________, I would like to ask you to put yourself in the hypothetical position of serving on a committee appointed to search for a new administrator because Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________ is retiring. What would be most important to look for in a person applying for this position? (Try to get at least four items)

A. ____
B. ____
C. ____
D. ____
E. ____
F. ____
G. ____
H. ____
I. ____

8. What does Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________ possess that you feel helps him/her the most to perform his/her job effectively? (Try to get at least four items)

A. ____
B. ____
C. ____
D. ____
E. ____
F. ____
G. ____
H. ____

Event #1

9. Now, I would like you to think of your first event. In order to help you do this, I want you to think of a time that you believe Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________ was particularly effective as an administrator. This would be a time you felt like he/she accomplished something, a time you felt particularly good about his/her leadership.

    A. What event would you like to talk about? (EVENT) ____________________

    ____

    ____

PROBES Specific> General	**BEHAVIOR** (What you/he/she did & why)	**THOUGHT/FELT** (You/others think or feel)	**EXAMPLES** (Specific)
Who was involved and how?			
What led up to the situation? Describe the situation.			
What happened?			
How did it all turn out? (outcome)			

Event #2

10. Great, I have a good understanding of that situation. It's just the kind of thing we are looking for. Now, I would like for you to think of another event where you believe Mr./Ms./Dr. ____________________ was particularly effective. Again, this would be a time where you felt like he/she accomplished something, an incident where you felt particularly good about his/her leadership.

    A. What event would you like to talk about? (EVENT) ________________________

    ____

    ____

PROBES Specific> General	**BEHAVIOR** (What you/he/she did & why)	**THOUGHT/FELT** (You/others think or feel)	**EXAMPLES** (Specific)
Who was involved and how?			
What led up to the situation? Describe the situation.			
What happened?			
How did it all turn out? (outcome)			

Great, that event was very informative. Now I need to get some background information.

11. How many years have you taught? ______________ years

12. How many years have you taught with Mr./Ms./Dr. ______________?
______________ years

13. What specific subject area(s) do you now teach? ______________________

14. What is your highest level of schooling?
A. __________ High school
B. __________ Some college or technical training
C. __________ College graduate
D. __________ Some graduate work
E. __________ M.S./M.A.
F. __________ Doctorate or other professional degree

15. Besides saying hello in the hall and "small talk," how often do you have a conversation with Mr./Ms./Dr. ______________ as one professional to another?
A. ____________ hourly
B. ____________ daily
C. ____________ weekly
D. ____________ monthly

16. Does Mr./Ms./Dr. ______________ evaluate your teaching performance?
____________ yes (go to closing comments)
____________ no (go to question #17)

17. (If no) Who does evaluate your teaching performance? (position)
____

Mr./Ms./Dr.____________________, I would like to express our appreciation for you taking time from your busy schedule for this interview. I've certainly enjoyed talking with you today. What you have contributed will go a long ways toward developing materials to prepare vocational administrators.

Thanks again and have a good day.

Good-bye.

Appendix E

Example of a
Behavioral Event Interview
Write-up

EXAMPLE OF A
BEHAVIORAL EVENT INTERVIEW WRITE-UP

Interview Date: 3/30/89
Location Code: S3
Interviewee Code: S3A1
Type of Interviewee: Administrator
Interviewer: JAG
Event: #1

Situation: When I came into this position, the school was losing money each month. If this trend was going to continue, the school was going to have to close its doors.

Who Was Involved: The administrator, his three vice-presidents, local business and industry leaders, and the school staff were involved in this event.

Behavior (Actually Did): I called an all-day meeting that consisted of my three vice-presidents and myself. The three VPs and I started with my position and basically worked down the organizational chart to the custodian. We, in effect, changed twenty-nine positions in one day. The three VPs and I changed what persons did, when they did it, where they did it, and who they communicated with. As a result of this reorganization, some part-time staff members lost their jobs. Once my assistants and I accomplished this, the VPs and I established a priority for our expenditures. The three VPs and I cut wherever we could find a place. I also eliminated a couple of programs that always had low enrollments and were not meeting industry's needs. In essence, I started running this school like a business. If the courses were not cost productive, I eliminated them. I also started emphasizing the need for everyone to market this school. I feel my vice-presidents and I set a good example for this by communicating with our local legislators and getting our local allotment increased. A week or so after this initial meeting, I called another meeting with my vice-presidents. This time we examined all the rules and regulations this school is supposed to meet. I did this so that the vice-presidents and I could make sure that the school would still meet its legal and social obligations, but minimize the expenditures in doing so. For example, this school does meet the needs of the handicapped, but not exactly how the State Department recommends. Another thing I did was when I hired an instructor for a new program that the school was opening, I made sure that person was business-oriented. In other words, new staff members had to know the bottom line was productivity.

Thoughts/Feelings: When I accepted this position I was aware that the school had problems, but I was not aware of the seriousness of its financial difficulties. Once I became aware of this, I thought unless I take some drastic measures this school would be closed. So I thought, instead of just being an administrator by following the State's wishes, I would have to take matters in my own hands and become a manager. Once I took this action, I did feel a lot more stress because I knew I would have to assume all the responsibility for my actions. However, I really didn't see any other way for this school to make it.

Once we had gotten this school operating in the black, I did feel good but not great. There is a big difference in just making it and excelling. So that is when I started examining new paths for the school to take. In essence, this is when I believe I started showing some leadership. In other words, I became proactive.

Outcome: The institution is now operating in the black. To make this school the lean machine it is today took some drastic action. I think the changes I initiated at this school were at first viewed with some skepticism. However, because the school can be described as a successful operation, I believe the school now is being used as a model by the State Department.